VOLUME V

Quadrant

An Australian Quarterly Review

NUMBER 4

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Annual subscription 20s., post free. Subscriptions may be addressed to: QUADRANT, BOX 4714, Sydney, N.S.W.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

In this issue appears the first of a series of articles we have planned under the general title *What Is To Be Done?* The title is not original. Lenin used it for one of his most important writings; and he did not invent it either, but in using it consciously evoked memories of a famous social-revolutionary novel called *What Is To Be Done?* written by Nicolas Chernyshevsky in the eighteen-sixties. Lenin had devoured Chernyshevsky's novel in his youth and continued to praise it. Today, a century later, we face a world different from what Chernyshevsky or Lenin hoped for or intended, and the same question remains insistent. We have asked F.E.Chamberlain, the Federal Secretary of the ALP, to lead off with a discussion of problems facing Australia and the world. He will be followed by others, including B.A.Santamaria and E.L.Wheelwright who are lined up for the next two issues.

Sir John Latham's article in *Quadrant* 18 criticizing the Immigration Reform Group's proposals has had rather wide publicity and attention. Two members of the Group, J.A.C.Mackie and Kenneth Rivett have written a reply to which Sir John has added a last-minute rejoinder.

The 'Recollections in Tranquillity' of which J.Normington-Rawling writes are not as Wordsworthian as the title may suggest. They have to do with the organization of 'peace' conferences and fronts by the Communist Party in the nineteen-thirties, and provide some useful lessons for those who are disposed to learn them.

For some time past we have been building up a series of articles re-examining the work of important Australian writers past and present. The two critical articles in this issue fit into this series. Jennifer Dallimore probes the moral imagination of Henry Handel Richardson; and the Editor carries out a deferred intention to state his view of what A.D.Hope's misunderstood poetry is really about.

Among the poets we welcome three who have not published poetry before in *Quadrant*: Vivian Smith, whose comments on Brennan we published in *Quadrant* 18; Charles Doyle, of Irish origin, London-born, who has lived and published poetry in New Zealand over the past ten years; and T.H.Jones, a poet from Wales, now at the Newcastle University College, who has previously written criticism for us.

Thomas Molnar's Letter from New York was written from Hunter College, New York, but he is at present visiting France and the Middle East.

Eric Feldt, well-known for his book *The Coast Watchers*, joined the New Guinea Administration in 1923. He rejoined the RAN in 1939 and organized the Coast-watchers during the war until retired through illness.

WARNING

Readers are asked not to be too surprised if they find that *Quadrant* has a new appearance next issue. We feel that the time has come for changes in the direction of increased legibility and variety.

THE NEED FOR DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM

F.E.Chamberlain

THE question, what is to be done? can only be intelligently answered if we first of all know why we are doing things. What is the purpose? What is the objective we seek to reach? In the average home, I have no doubt that the average citizen would have little difficulty in answering the question as related to his home and family.

He would undoubtedly say that his objective was to provide security in the home; security which would come from the right of the breadwinner to be usefully employed in the community, and being remunerated at a level which would enable him to discharge the responsibilities of family life.

I could imagine him insisting that with the application of modern science, the evidence of which abounds on all sides, his wife should be divorced from the drudgery of housekeeping.

I think he would easily subscribe to the proposition that his children should be given an equal opportunity with all other children, to become well equipped with knowledge which a modern education system could undoubtedly provide.

In many homes, of course, these objectives have been reached. They have been reached by the successful business and professional groups. The artisan and labouring groups are struggling under severe handicap to reach the objectives. Lottery tickets and hire purchase finance are significantly present here.

The top groups with a few exceptions are, almost to a man, intelligently conservative. That is, they assist in conditioning the public mind to resist movements of reform because such movements inevitably disturb the privileged position they occupy in society.

The groups who are struggling for greater economic equity contain large numbers of unintelligent conservatives. Unlike the top groups, they have very little to conserve. Many of them, who undoubtedly view themselves as quite intelligent persons, would be shocked to be told that their reading which, in many cases, is confined solely to the daily press, plus the development of a social snobbishness, is largely responsible for their lack of awareness of the need to plan for social and economic change.

It may be observed at this stage that the point I endeavour to make is that while it is a comparatively easy task to get the individual citizen to agree to certain basic principles which are directed towards securing a greater measure of social and economic justice, it is a much more difficult task to obtain collective agreement.

In any form of society it could be argued that economic and social injustices would make their appearance and no political system would provide the millennium in human affairs.

Conservative parties, tied as they are to the system of private enterprise, will argue hotly that this system provides the citizens in the community with reasonable opportunities.

The Communist Party, on the other extreme, is constantly submitting that only the complete destruction of capitalism can provide such opportunities. Mr Krushchev has made it abundantly clear that he believes in the inevitability of Communism.

The Australian Labor Party, together with democratic socialist bodies throughout the world, holds firmly to the inevitability of change, but opposes the conclusion that the change must result in Communism. We will undoubtedly go from capitalism to some other 'ism' in the same way that we went from feudalism to capitalism.

Whether we have violent change leading to the establishment of Communism, or change based upon orderly and constitutional methods depends upon the development of public thinking. This development in turn depends upon not only the policies of government in the parliamentary democracies, but the support of such policies by employer organizations, the industrial unions and, most important of all, the press.

Mr Walter Lippman, the noted American commentator, dealing with the convictions of Mr Krushchev, is rather critical of his country's policy of dealing with the growth of Communism in economically backward countries. He points out, as did the late Mr J.B.Chifley, that you cannot fight Communism with bayonets and bombs. Communism, to the people of backward countries, means fuller bellies. It is on this basis, says Mr Lippman, that the West must compete.

America may have learned something of this lesson from the Cuban affair. Reports state that the Administration is now giving attention to a ten-year programme for Latin America. The programme is 'aimed at raising living standards, providing basic education, ending hunger and placing each nation on a basis of self-sustaining growth'.

If this sensible approach had been thought of and carried

into effect two years ago Cuba would not now be in the Communist camp.

Not only should this provide a lesson for the American Administration, it should extend to the conservatives of our own country.

In a relatively prosperous community such as exists in Australia, there is a tendency to limit thinking to our geographical boundaries. These limits preclude proper appreciation of the fundamental relationship of Australia with the rest of the world. Too many people have reached the conclusion that our economic health can be cared for by national policies based upon a system which carries the emphasis of private enterprise. Australia, to survive as a parliamentary democracy, must pay increasing attention to world affairs and be courageous enough to reject the policy of 'conformism'.

Economic policies are fundamental in their relationship to world peace. Unless liberalism is practised in the establishment of national economic policies, it has little chance of being introduced into the thinking of the powers that be in international relations.

If it be conceded that economic forces more than anything else are the roots of international tensions—and when one looks at the trigger spots, all representative of the economically backward countries, it becomes difficult to reject—then it would appear logical to assert that economic thinking and planning become paramount in the affairs of men.

What, then, must be done in Australia if there is to be a material contribution to the wellbeing of the community, both economically and in the preservation of world peace? Because it is elementary to say in this nuclear age that unless the latter is achieved, then a patchy approach to the former is without meaning.

A plethora of newspaper editorials over recent years has called upon the Australian Labor Party to rethink economic problems. But what do their authors mean by 'rethinking?'

Do they mean revolutionary change in fundamental thinking, or, as I suspect, call upon us to find new orthodox avenues which basically will rest upon the continuance of a system which carries undue emphasis upon the rights of individuals in unfettered private enterprise?

If there is to be rethinking it should commence with the idea of a political economy based upon the common good. We must develop a sense of social responsibility in the community. This is particularly needed on the part of those who are largely in

control of 'economic behaviour', i.e. directorates of combines, banking institutions, media of mass communication and government.

How much time have we got?

There are some people, particularly in more progressive circles in the United States of America, who believe there is a high degree of urgency. This belief flows from their close association with the technological world with which America is, more than any other country, so closely identified. There is a keen awareness of the inevitability of drastic change in all political and economic arrangements, which is speeding towards a new world order.

The circumstances of economic development in Australia since the close of World War II find a parallel in the American scene. America, the richest of the Western countries, with a population of one hundred and forty millions, is short on a national conscience, with six millions workless and many more millions on the borderline. Australia, a country of great wealth potential, with a population of ten millions is failing to preserve the policy of full employment to the extent of ninty thousand workless people.

We find, too, a growth of monopolistic industrial concerns with the attendant features of price fixing and restrictive trade practices modelled on the corporation system of the United States. This aspect of our 'free private enterprise' society received pentrating attention from Dr H.C.Coombs, Governor of the Reserve Bank of Australia, in an address in 1959, which appeared in the *Australian Journal of Science*. On page 184 he says:

> In manufacturing industry, especially, there is a strong trend towards methods which reduce the unit cost of production—sometimes in quite dramatic terms. It is hard, however, to find examples of products which, as a consequence, are sold to the consumer at lower price. . . . This attitude makes it difficult, if not impossible, for the community at large to obtain the benefits of increasing productivity through being able to buy at lower prices and therefore having a surplus to devote to other forms of consumption or to savings.

We are only on the threshold of automation in Australia. There will be an increasing acceleration in productivity through the application of more and more technological process to industry. What planning is being done by the huge industrial giants to meet the need for economic and social change, which will become more and more apparent as their almost unrestricted powers continue? It would be no exaggeration to say that there is an almost complete absence of thinking on their part as to the problems of the future, without which, of course, there can be no planning.

If we continue to drift, what kind of a future do we face? Do we wait until the future is upon us with large numbers of technologically unemployed, or do we start to do something now? In a report to the White House, US Congressman Elmer J. Holland said: 'It seems to me that one of the greatest problems with automation is not the worker who is fired, but the worker who is not hired.'

I introduce the question of automation for the sole purpose of illustrating the submission that capitalist society, in its present form, cannot meet the challenge of the future. And in the event of the military machine being eliminated from the requirements of society, the submission has far greater emphasis.

If the economy is to continue to function upon the basis of 'no industry without profit', and surely that is the position, how do we use the production flowing from the processes of the technological and nuclear age? How do we take care of an ever-growing army of technologically unemployed? How do we compete with the economic systems of the Communist countries in the underdeveloped and underprivileged areas of the world if we say that we cannot provide goods and services until they are in a position to meet the profit margins of the corporation and the private entrepreneur?

It is true, of course, that for military strategic purposes much economic aid is provided by taxation on industry. But this only touches upon the fringe of the problem, and in many instances has failed in its limited objective because political expediency has become transparent in such deals.

We have been dealing with effects rather than cause.

If, then, as seems more than probable, industry itself is unaware of the 'economic Frankenstein' that it is assisting to build, and it has no policy to meet it, government intervention becomes vitally inperative. There are strong, influential forces in the community who will immediately react to this by asserting that the function of government is to provide the surroundings and climate in which private enterprise can flourish. This attitude, of course, does not prevent their approval of government devices or plans designed to 'help the business climate', e.g. tariffs, quotas, subsidies and certain restrictions on production.

Here my previous point should be noted, i.e., unless we have liberal thinking in national domestic economic policies, it is unlikely to be introduced in vital international attitudes.

Despite the deep belief of the business community that contemporary capitalism, with all its paradoxes and contradictions, represents the finest and final flowering of economic organization,

this traditional concept is being questioned by an increasingly large number of people.

It can also be said that despite conservative opposition, the concept of government in the economic life of the community has been subject to gradual change. This move from negative to more affirmative notions about the role of government is in more or less direct relation to the national budget, and it may be expected to become more pronounced as budgets get larger. As the budget and the nation grows, so there will be an increasing perception of the need for greater exercise of national economic powers on the part of the national government.

This view finds support in the report and recommendations of the Joint Committee on Australian Constitutional Review. The significance of the recommendations is found in the large measure of common ground discovered in the thinking of conservative and Labor parliamentarians who comprised the Committee.

In its review of the present economic powers exercised by the Commonwealth Parliament, the Committee observed that the Commonwealth has legislative powers which could be exercised to affect the state of the national economy but these powers collectively did not permit the development of an integrated economic policy. The growth of specialized financial institutions outside the banking structure had made the Parliament's banking powers far less useful than at the time of Federation. At the time of Federation the economy had not developed sufficiently to permit the easy allocation of economic powers between the States and the Federal Parliament. At that time no Government was responsible for the general state of the economy, including full employment, stability of the value of the currency and the rate and balance of economic development.

The Committee stated that the Commonwealth now had to discharge responsibilities which did not exist at the time of Federation, and therefore, recommended that it should now have concurrent legislative powers over capital issues, consumer credit and interest rates, so that it could fulfil its duty to 'safeguard and promote the economic welfare of the community of Australia'.

Here the emphasis is placed upon the 'economic welfare of the community'.

Again, dealing with restrictive trade practices, the Committee recommended: 'The Commonwealth Parliament should have an express power to make laws with respect to restrictive trade practices which are, or are likely to be, contrary to the public interest.'

Here again note the reference 'the public interest'.

Obviously 'the public interest cannot be protected', 'the economic welfare of the community cannot be promoted', if complete freedom as it is understood by the adherents to unfettered private enterprise is to continue. Private investment of capital in industry is motivated purely by an assessment of the return that can come from the market in the form of profit. The people concerned do not—because they believe it to be not their function—endeavour to access the effect upon the national economic wellbeing.

In times of national crisis, governments of different political philosophy are forced to recognize the fundamental weakness of private enterprise and take remedial action to curb the normal unrestricted private investment of capital. This was done in Australia by Mr Chifley's Government during the last war. A Capital Issues Control Board was charged with the responsibility of directing the use of capital to those industries that were basic to the requirements of the war effort, and restricting its use in the unessential sectors of the economy. These controls continued after the cessation of hostilities for the very good reason that the post-war economy contained similar characteristics to those of the war years. This action on the part of the Government was prompted by the fact that private enterprise, if left to its own devices, would invest its surplus capital in any venture offering substantial profit without regard for the national welfare.

Reference to this failing in the private enterprise system is found in the Commonwealth Bank Report 1948, made by the then Governor, Mr H.T.Armitage, on pages 25 and 26:

> The Central Bank would not be doing its duty if it failed to point out that in the present conditions of high monetary liquidity, if controls are retained in essential sectors, but abandoned elsewhere, then those essential sectors will in all likelihood, if the controls are effective, be starved of resources. The attraction of higher profit margins in the uncontrolled sectors will be powerful and pervasive; and not only physical resources but manpower as well will respond. In the upshot, the most severe scarcities may be experienced in the essential sectors of the economy, while in the non-essential sectors we shall see a dispersion of resources which on all sensible grounds could usefully be applied elsewhere. . . .

In more recent times we have seen the results of a policy on the part of a national government which produced severe distortions in the economy. The motor car industry, without any governmental restraint, and relying entirely on a free market, expanded its production to a point which, in the opinion of the Government, threatened the wellbeing of the economy. Drastic

measures were then taken which resulted in a curb on production and a large volume of additional unemployment.

Economic restraint by government is not in the national interest unless it is well planned and sustained. Government economic policy which permits complete freedom of investment and production and is only moved to a policy of restraint when crises occur receives and deserves condemnation, not only from employees who have lost their employment, but from employers who, under encouragement from an essentially private enterprise government, expanded in the best tradition of the system.

Leaders of industry cannot, of course, be absolved from all blame on the ground that the complete responsibility lies with government. The policies of conservative governments are, to an alarming extent, shaped by the monopolies and combines.

In connection with this phase it is of more than passing interest to read a very thought provoking book written some years ago by Mr Walter Scott, an Australian business executive, titled *Greater Production*. Dealing with the challenge of ideologies to capitalism, Mr Scott quotes from an article 'Industry's New Responsibility' by an American businessman, Walter H. Wheeler Jnr:

> We should realize, too, that the trend to the left in Western Europe and in England has by no means been just the result of two world wars, nor has it been because of the generic characteristics of the peoples involved. It is basically the result of capitalistic systems which were not sufficiently democratic and competitive. It is the result of the failure of the leaders of capitalism in Europe to realize that, in seeking security for themselves—by combines, cartels and other restrictive devices—they enervated their systems to the point where they no longer provided ever-increasing production, rising standards of living and new opportunities for the people they served.

The Australian people are demanding that their future shall provide them with economic security. There is a growing awareness that this security cannot be obtained from a system of private enterprise. In the minds of thousands of ordinary people, particularly those of an age to remember the disastrous years of the 'thirties, private enterprise is associated with a series of booms, wars and depressions.

Mr Scott shows in his book that private enterprise faces the challenge of the future with some trepidation. He says in his introduction:

> Ultimately it becomes the duty of a government to step in and remedy the deficiencies of management, and therefore either management must find a solution for some of our problems or a solution will be forced upon us. We have to show that we are just as concerned with human progress as we are with company profits.

Although I have endeavoured to avoid a purely party-political

approach in the writing of this article, because I believe that to be in accord with the requirements of the publisher, I am unable to refrain from asserting that the first thing to be done in Australia directed towards the moulding of a future which should rest upon the common good, is the establishment of an Australian Labor Party Government.

It is true that such a government would be faced with formidable difficulties as related to overseas factors and internal constitutional barriers, but it would be a government whose basic thinking rests upon the principles of promoting national economic health in its widest application. It would be a government of true liberalism in the field of international affairs, and, as I have previously submitted, unless the nations can find a formula of peaceful co-existence, national economic policies, important as they are to national communities, fade into insignificance. It would be a government which would recognize that changes are inevitable in human society. Only the fool or the knave would support the proposition that the affairs of mankind can remain immutable.

Changes can come as a result of an informed public opinion geared to accept new machinery to cope with the problems of a new era. Or they can come with violence and without warning, leaving the people powerless to make any contribution to the development of a new way of life.

The latter comes as a result of refusing to think about the inevitability of change and spells Communism.

The first may come about only if people insist upon 'thinking out' the problems of human existence, thus shedding their ingrained prejudices which make them so susceptible to the propaganda of conservatism. This spells democratic socialism.

F.E.Chamberlain

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AUSTRALIA'S IMMIGRATION POLICY

A REPLY TO SIR JOHN LATHAM

J.A.C.Mackie and Kenneth Rivett

IN AN article in *Quadrant*, Sir John Latham attacks the pamphlet *Control or Colour Bar?* which was published last year by the Immigration Reform Group. Sir John is one of those rare public men whose opponents would one and all agree that he never distorts their views intentionally. It is therefore with real regret that we must protest that the case he attacks is almost a travesty of our proposals and arguments.

Sir John implies, in so many words, that our account of Australia's immigration policy is inaccurate and does not show 'a proper understanding of the policy'. He asserts that we want the admission of 'much larger numbers of Asians'. His summary of our case implies that our one positive reason for seeking this change is to placate Asian opinion. He also accuses us of thinking 'that any restrictions upon immigration (apart from exclusion of criminals and obviously undesirable persons) with a view to permanent settlement can be supported only upon economic grounds'. Lastly, he suggests that criticism such as ours may 'do much harm to the reputation of Australia' when published abroad.

These charges must be dealt with one by one before discussing some wider implications of Sir John's point of view.

(1) The first chapter of *Control or Colour Bar?* begins by describing recent and current Acts governing immigration to this country. As we say then and there, admission of immigrants is wholly at the Minister's discretion, but no reference is made to race. This last fact is the only reason we can conceive for Sir John stating 'that colour is not a criterion of any qualification for a migrant seeking to enter Australia and to remain there'.

Having pointed out that this was the legal position, we went on to show how colour in fact largely determines Australia's policy in selecting migrants from some European countries rather than from others. Colour mainly decides where Europe is regarded as ending, and the continents from which immigration is almost impossible are regarded as beginning. Colour determines which would-be immigrants of mixed race are considered to have

acceptable ancestors. We reproduced, mainly in the Minister's own words, the fullest statement yet made on the classes of non-European migrant for whom exceptions from the basic policy are now permitted. We reported such facts as were ascertainable concerning the admission of non-Europeans.

What more could we do to state the official policy fairly? The one potentially important fact, not in our pamphlet, to which Sir John draws attention is that in the year 1959-60, 500 Asians—the actual figure is 608—received Australian citizenship. This figure was not available when *Control or Colour Bar?* went to press, but in any case no safe inference can be drawn from it in the present connection. Only in October 1957 did the Minister for Immigration announce that Asians who had been here for fifteen years already would be allowed to apply for citizenship. Recent figures may have been much affected by a backlog of applications from people in this category, including some from the 800 evacuees who were admitted during the war. Mr Downer has said himself that he believes future naturalizations of Asians will probaly be 'fewer rather than more' than at present. (*Hansard* 26/4/61)

When one considers that the only non-Europeans let in are spouses, acceptable persons who have stayed somehow for fifteen years, a few 'distinguished and highly qualified Asians' and a small number of refugees, one cannot agree with Sir John that the term 'White Australia' is 'a very inaccurate description of Australian policy'. He says that the recent figure for admissions to citizenship does not look like 'absolute exclusion of Asians'. A casual reader might think it was we who had used that phrase. But as Sir John acknowledges earlier, it comes from the Singapore *Straits Times*. Nowhere does the pamphlet say that the present policy is one of rigid exclusion. Yet it is rigid enough to be termed a 'colour bar'—like the segregation customs of Maryland, which is not in the Deep South and where conditions have improved somewhat in recent years.

It is irrelevant that Asian governments have immigration laws similar to ours. Unlike the Australian Government, they do not actively encourage immigration and, at the same time, exclude almost every would-be immigrant of different skin colour. It is also irrelevant that no Asian government is asking for 'a change in the Australian law with respect to immigration'. Neither are we! It is not the law, nor our right to make such laws, that is in dispute, but the wisdom of our policy within the present legal framework.

(2) Sir John accuses us of saying 'that there would be no

economic (or other) danger in admitting a much larger number of Asian settlers—proposed numbers not stated, but not to be unlimited'. This statement distorts grievously our whole case and what we are asking for.

The charge of wanting much larger numbers of Asian immigrants is made four times in the course of his article. For instance, according to Sir John, 'the pamphlet pleads for much greater Asian immigration on the ground that it would "enrich our culture".' What the pamphlet said was: 'We need at least a small inflow of Asian migrants for Australia's sake. We need them to enrich our culture.[1]

Control or Colour Bar? did not ask for 'a much larger number of Asian settlers', and nowhere is our argument open to that interpretation. What we did was to list and to explain the various factors by which intake should be limited: 'the need to avoid harmful economic competition that gives rise to social tensions, to prevent a concentration of any racial group in low-status employment, to avoid housing congestion and to ensure reasonable dispersion throughout the Australian community.' (pp. 47-48)

We urged that for a period of three to five years, only a small number of non-Europeans should be admitted. This would allow time to see how the successors of the non-Europeans who are already here were fitting into the Australian scene. There was 'much to be said for hastening slowly'. (p. 38) We specifically urged that in later agreements with non-European governments, 'the number of immigrants in any particular category, and the total number of non-Europeans, might be varied—up or down.' (p. 48)

It seems to us that the most important task was to state, explicitly, what we thought were the criteria of satisfactory absorption. No one can predict what the application of these criteria will involve in twenty or thirty years' time. Hence we would have been presumptuous, or downright inconsistent, if we had stated the number or proportion of non-Europeans whom Australia might absorb eventually. Even for recent years, the intake of non-European settlers is not known. However, after trying to estimate the highest reasonable figure, we were prepared to say that Australia 'could now accept several times the recent average rate of intake without undue strain'. (p. 45)

[1] The pamphlet went on: 'We need them to increase our understanding of our Asian neighbours and to prepare us for participation in the inter-racial councils of the world. We need them if our present efforts to help Asia are to be well directed and successful.' (p. 11)

Sir John accuses us of saying that 'the idea that the presence of a much larger number of Asians would bring about racial tensions represents "the blackest pessimism".' The phrase quoted appears on page 12, where we say that 'such pessimism is clearly implied by the maintenance of White Australia'. Sir John may not agree with that assessment, but he is quite wrong to link the phrase with talk of 'a much larger number of Asians'.

(3) Sir John states that our case for a new policy as regards non-European migration rests on 'the existence of objections (regarded as well founded) by Asians to what is thought to be the present policy'. He also mentions our brief reference to cultural enrichment.

He does not mention a persistent theme of the pamphlet, first developed on pages 12-13, that the present immigration policy 'seriously hampers constructive efforts to improve racial attitudes in this country'. Nor does he mention our clear statement that 'the first and perhaps the more important [argument for changing the White Australia policy] is the effect of the policy within Australia'; the second, its disastrous impact on non-European opinion. 'It seems to us important,' said the Immigration Reform Group, 'that arguments for a change in the policy should be stated in this order.' (p. 11) If the first argument were not so powerful, Australia could reply with conviction to Asian objections.

Sir John accuses us of making too much of occasional slights to Asian students. We did not say that these slights were either extensive or significant. We did say that the White Australia policy has harmed Australia's reputation in every country from which she draws students, and that because of it Asian students are more suspicious than they otherwise would be, with the result, as the pamphlet puts it, that 'a chance incident may be magnified out of all proportion'. (p. 14)

(4) Again, it shows a complete misunderstanding to say that the only grounds we see for restrictions on immigration are economic. We do discuss economic dangers; and our warnings against concentration in low-status occupations (pp. 28-29) and housing congestion (p. 32) can perhaps be regarded as 'economic'. But what of our full discussion of 'assimilation' and its attendant problems (pp. 29-32), for which we propose specific solutions? Our attitude is put clearly on page 24: 'If we deal first with the economic effects, it is not because we necessarily think that these are more important, but because they greatly affect the context in which other effects of immigration must be examined.'

(5) Lastly, Sir John suggests that criticism such as ours may do

much harm to the reputation of Australia' when published abroad. 'Much harm' is unlikely to result from a pamphlet described by the London *Times* as 'soberly written' and by the *Times Educational Supplement* as 'distinguished by the reasonableness of its approach'. We would go further and suggest that some good was done by the long account of *Control or Colour Bar?* which appeared in that world famous newspaper, the Madras *Hindu*.

For if we may say so, what distinguishes the pamphlet from many previous attacks on the White Australia policy is that we did not accuse its supporters of believing in racial superiority. We did not even accuse them of racial prejudice. We quoted some recent public opinion poll figures on modification of the policy, and pointed out that the group who oppose change—by 1959 a minority—are not necessarily prejudiced. They may merely be afraid, as Sir John evidently is, that the prejudices of other Australians will cause friction. All this was reproduced faithfully in the Madras *Hindu*.

Because Sir John has misconceived our argument, he raises few of the points in the pamphlet that undoubtedly need further discussion. However, there are some exceptions.

On the matter of Asian attitudes, he refers to his experience in China and Japan. His reply to the Japanese journalist was certainly convincing—as a defence of the principle of immigration control. It is not this principle that Asians object to, but the fact that our present immigration policy involves the almost complete exclusion of non-whites.

The core of Sir John's argument seems to be found in the passage: 'Ours is a European civilization. . . . Asian countries differ from Australia not only in colour and race and language, but also in tradition and history and loyalties, in social and political outlook and organization, in religion (except for minorities), in manner of living, and in standards of living.' Yet a measure of diversity in each of these respects need not produce racial tension. And whatever the degree of homogeneity that Australia desires, a racial barrier is not thereby justified.

Is Sir John's 'social and political outlook' more like that of an Irish Republican or an Indian Liberal? Are his ultimate loyalties nearer those of a Burmese jurist or a Greek peasant? Is not the living standard of the Burmese jurist closer to his own? Above all—and this is the acid test of his argument—how can we defend the exclusion of American negroes, bred in a culture so similar to ours? Homogeneity cannot be equated with whiteness.

The White Australia policy arose from a sense of racial difference. It operates today in terms of racial difference, and it leaves us saddled with a needless consequence of racial difference —separateness, a word which a more grimly logical nation translates as 'apartheid'. Ninety per cent of Australians never meet a non-European socially, much less work beside one on terms of equality and mutual respect. In the shrinking world of the twentieth century, when clear thinking on racial issues is essential to our survival, this is a serious matter.

Control or Colour Bar?, of course, is merely the latest of a number of efforts to devise and defend an immigration policy that will satisfy the conscience of Australians and be acceptable, for substantially the same reasons, to Australia's critics overseas. The pamphlet is internationalist in tone, like much Australian political writing of recent years. Yet it does not challenge some of the assumptions on which Australians discuss the problems of controlling immigration. We do not challenge the existing situation whereby Australia, like every other nation, retains the ultimate legal right to limit its intake of immigrants. We agree that immigration may need to be restricted in order to avoid friction. Since national origins may be relevant from this standpoint, we do not even object to the fact that Australia treats would-be immigrants differently according to their nationality. We admit that immigration policy should take account of the fact of persisting racial prejudice, even while insisting that the extent of such prejudice in Australia is often exaggerated.

These opinions are so much part of the climate of Australian thought that it is easy to forget that the principles implied are not shared in important circles overseas. For instance, after the outbreaks of violence in Britain against the West Indians, suggestions that restrictions should be placed on non-white immigration, even though the immigrants might come from within the Commonwealth, were specifically rejected by spokesmen of all political parties except for the lunatic fringe on the extreme Right. In Asia control of immigration is practised widely, but Mr Nehru has announced publicly that India will only restrict immigration on a reciprocal basis, in order to get better treatment for would-be emigrants from India.

Early in this century, the White Australia policy won little support from liberal internationalists in other countries. They condemned it, not only as a form of racial discrimination, but also because, at that time, any barrier to immigration was suspect in such quarters. Today it is very widely conceded that

there may be good grounds for controlling population movements, and that the nation-state may be an appropriate unit for the exercise of control. The world has come to esteem the type of nationalism that finds its most developed justification in the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi. Some of the appeal of this new nationalism lies in the idea that the individual, through respecting the nation, can come to respect himself. His newfound self-respect extends to other individuals and even to other nations. This kind of nationalism is essentially compatible with other nationalisms. No other kind is compatible ultimately with peace.

In sphere after sphere distinctions are being established between defensible and indefensible ways in which a nation may safeguard the interests of its citizens against the competing interests of outsiders. Other countries besides Australia control immigration so as to prevent economic and social conflicts. Australia's desire to avoid these evils would easily find acceptance and understanding throughout the world if its method of control showed a due regard for the needs, the susceptibilities and the innate dignity of persons of different race. The present policy fails to do so. It fails because of the enormous importance which is attached to the mere fact of racial difference. During the debates on the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901, speech after speech contained remarks that were as venomous as they were offensive. Is it likely that an essentially identical policy can still be defended without invoking prejudice? Is it credible that there should be no practicable middle ground between total exclusion and unrestricted admission?

It would certainly not be worthwhile to achieve what Sir John calls 'speculative benefits in enrichment of culture' at the price of a serious risk of racial friction. But if we are right in holding that friction could be avoided by some such scheme as the Immigration Reform Group's, the cultural gain might be considerable. It has been unduly neglected by Australians, partly because of scepticism about the kind of synthesis of Western and Eastern cultures that has been tellingly, if rudely, described as 'Toynbeean mishmash', and partly because no very profound influence is likely to be exercised by a few Asians let in for the express purpose of transmitting specific cultural achievements.

Yet the matter deserves further enquiry. There are students of culture change who believe that the intellectual temper of Indian and Chinese civilizations, with their emphasis on reconciliation of opposing views, may prove more adaptable to the

demands of a technological age than the uncompromising and legalistic habits of mind which have served Western civilization in the period of technical and economic breakthrough. The drawbacks of basking in a narrowly exclusive cultural tradition have been shown in Needham's monumental history of *Science and Civilization in China*. This book also throws light on the contingent and non-rational features of our own cultural history that led to the breakthrough. Is it quite without significance that a scientist like J. Robert Oppenheimer finds spiritual nourishment in the *Bhagavad Gita*?

Cultural enrichment at this level is most likely to take place at the mainsprings of our civilization, but there is no reason why it should not spread from the peripheries. Moreover, contact with other cultures can be valuable through the quickening of imagination and the heightening of sensitivity that result from greater diversity of personal experiences. Gandhi, if we may mention him again, was an Asian who was creative both as a politician and as a political thinker. His creativeness was directly related to his twenty-five years in London and in South Africa where he could maintain continuous contact with Europeans.

Intellectual fruits of this kind are unpredictable, but far from negligible. In any process of cultural exchange, the humbler intermediaries, as well as the 'distinguished and highly qualified', whom Sir John mentions, are vital links. If we confine our contact with Asian civilizations to meetings with transient visitors and with the tiny number of Asians now admitted for permanent residence, we limit our chance of gaining anything, even at third or second hand.

J.A.C.Mackie and Kenneth Rivett

FOOTNOTE: In a footnote, Sir John points out that in our list of organizations opposed to the White Australia policy, we mistakenly included the National Council of Women and the National Fitness Council of Victoria. These slips, which can be explained if necessary, had already been corrected in the MS of the book version of *Control or Colour Bar?*, which will be published soon by Melbourne University Press.

Sir John also refers to an item that we had quoted, without comment, from the Melbourne *Age*. This stated that as a result of Australia taking over Direction Island in the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, several Asian families, some of whom had been born on the island, were forced to leave for Singapore. Before Sir John's article appeared, the Immigration Reform Group had approached the Department of Territories for further information and holds a letter, dated 29th December 1960, in substantially the same terms as the letter to Sir John from the Department of External Affairs.

It appears that the *Age* report was mistaken. The most likely explanation is that the departures from Direction Island were confused with a movement of families born on another island of the Cocos group (Home Island) to a third island (Christmas Island).

A REJOINDER TO THE REPLY

J.G.Latham

IN MAKING some comments upon the reply to my article in the March *Quadrant* upon Australian Immigration Policy I shall not repeat my original arguments, though I hope that all who read the Reply will have read, or will read, both the pamphlet *Control or Colour Bar?* and my article.

1. The sentence quoted was intended to dismiss mere colour as a proper ground for excluding a migrant—as I had already dismissed race as such a ground.

I agree that the pamphlet accurately quotes the statement of the Minsister for Immigration describing our policy. But the terms of that statement show plainly that the present policy cannot fairly be described as a mere 'Colour Bar'. The pamphlet itself states that in 1954 there were more than twenty-seven thousand Asians in Australia. There are today about eight thousand students here—but not as permanent residents. They are here to acquire knowledge and skills for the benefit of their own peoples when they leave Australia.

The title of the pamphlet *Control or Colour Bar?* contrasts what is represented as control with what is represented as a mere colour bar. I admit that I do not consider 'Colour Bar' to be an accurate description of a system which has permitted some thousands of Asians to settle here permanently and other thousands to come here for purposes of education.

The laws of India, Pakistan, Burma, Ceylon, Malaya, Singapore, Vietnam and Japan (of which I have copies) are identical in principle with Australian immigration law. I do not regard this fact as irrelevant to the consideration of alleged Asian objections to our policy. None of the governments of Asian countries have ever, so far as is known, presumed to make any request upon the subject to an Australian Government. They are not in a position to do so. Responsible people would not do so and the massed millions of Asians almost certainly know nothing about the subject. It is interesting to note that the High Commissioner for Malaya to Australia and New Zealand was reported in April last as saying that 'White Australia policy' was a misnomer: 'There is no bad feeling among the Malayan people on the White Australia policy. . . . We realize this is an internal problem and Australia is quite right in the way she is tackling it.'

2. What the pamphlet says is: 'We could now accept several times the recent average rate of intake without undue strain' and

'for an experimental period of about five years the number of non-Europeans allowed to settle permanently could be set at several times the number coming in over recent years.' Surely I cannot fairly be accused of distorting the case made in the pamphlet when I said that it advocated 'a much larger number of Asian settlers—proposed numbers not stated, but not to be unlimited'. 'Several times' any given number is surely 'a much larger number'.

Admittedly one of the grounds—indeed the principal ground—for maintaining the present policy is to be found in the fear that any substantial modification as recommended in the pamphlet would run the risk of introducing into Australia racial tensions which at present do not exist. This opinion is described as 'the blackest pessimism'. I do not agree. Racial tension in many countries is, most deplorably, not diminishing but increasing. We act wisely in not creating in Australia a condition which would invite racial riots and international difficulties.

3. No particulars are given of the 'racial attitudes in this country' which require improvement. In fact, as is not disputed, Australia is fortunate in being almost completely free from racial tensions. As to non-European opinion—such opinion as there is doubtless varies. Our policy has never been a cause of international tension. But the pamphlet invites—and will doubtless help to create—such tension. Australians who do not understand our policy and who apologize for it in other countries do much harm.

4. The pamphlet mentions three dangers in increased migration which have to be watched. These are economic. The fourth is 'inadequate dispersion' of migrants—which, perhaps, is only partly economic. But as to other dangers, which may all be placed in the class of 'social dangers', they are dismissed in the chapter headed 'Would admitting non-Europeans create social tensions?'

It is suggested that 'the intellectual temper of Indian and Chinese civilizations, with their emphasis on reconciliation of opposing views, may prove more adaptable to the demands of a technological age' than the habits of Western civilization. I am not quite sure what this means. There are those who, in a general way, think that 'light comes from the East'. But these have not, as a rule, considered that the benefit gained would be related to any demands of technology.

I have said that I do not here repeat the arguments in my article. But I do wish to call attention to the fact that the positive proposal of the pamphlet is that the Australian Government should 'offer to sign migration agreements with non-Europea

countries'. The Reply says nothing about this. There are sixty-four such countries in the United Nations. I repeat that the adoption of such a course would be simply asking for trouble. It would create for Australia all over the world—outside Europe—problems which do not now exist. The pamphlet says: 'Our line would be that the exact number admitted from any particular country had no prestige connotations.' But particular countries might—of course unreasonably—not agree.

J.G.Latham

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RECOLLECTIONS IN TRANQUILLITY

J. Normington-Rawling

TO US who went through the mill in the nineteen-thirties and understand how and why the Communists organize 'peace' conferences and fronts, it is amazing, not merely that they are still at it, but that they are having greater success than ever, drawing in wider circles than they dreamed of a quarter of a century ago. Barnum was wrong. You *can* fool more and more people the longer you try.

The purpose of such conferences has always been to get as many people as possible thinking along lines parallel to the current international policies of the Soviet Union. As those policies have varied, so have the aims and programmes of the conferences—even to the point when neither aims and programme nor conferences were needed or desirable. The appeal has always been to 'people of good will' who, of course, are as ready to appropriate the description as the Prince of Arragon was to assume desert when Portia was the prize:

I will not jump with common spirits,
And rank me with the barbarous multitude.

If a conference has been able to rouse some fear so that numbers of people may be ready to surrender to Communist blackmail or even demand unilateral disarmament; if they have been conditioned to see the USSR white and the USA black; if more and more are ready to accept at their face value Communists on their best behaviour; if they have helped to pass resolutions couched in vague and meaningless language that sound well and others that may be made to mean what Communist propagandists may make them mean—in the name of the conference: then the conference was a success.

The Australian Peace Council of these days, under whatever name it goes, derives, in authentic apostolic succession, from the League Against Imperialism of thirty years ago—the first attempt in the sphere of international affairs to draw non-Communists under Communist control. That satellite of the Communist Party was formed, in Sydney, in August and September, 1930, as the Australian section of the parent body in Europe. It swallowed up the already existing Hands Off India Committee which, together with eight members of the

organizing meeting, now became the National Committee of the League. J.B.Steel, of the Howard Prison Reform League and the ALP, was elected President and became, through the three years or so of the League's existence, a good 'front', determinedly defying Labor Party bans and 'proving' that the League was not a Communist subsidiary. The new body was placed by the Communist Party under the control of E.M. Higgins, who was elected its National Secretary. Higgins had but recently been purged from Party leadership by the successful revolution headed by Sharkey and Moxon—the former is still with us, the latter fell by the way—its victory consolidated by the Comintern emissary, Herbert Moore Wicks, an American who himself later broke with the Party.

There was little pretence about the LAI—little attempt to camouflage CP policy and programme. Though allegedly a non-Communist body and, in the Party plans, designed to gather non-Communists under Communist control, you were a welcome member only if you accepted the Moscow outlook. If you challenged Communist control, you were introducing politics, and party politics had to be excluded in the interests of unity. If you became too critical, in those Third Period years, you could be branded as 'reactionary', or 'facist', or 'social-fascist'—this last being one, according to official definition, who 'under the cloak of working class activities, sabotages the class struggle and prepares the road for fascism!' All Labor men were such who did not co-operate with Communists.

Higgins, in the job thus assigned him, proved adept at keeping on the straight and narrow path. He had, for example, the unenviable job of preventing Jack Ryan from becoming active in the LAI, because he had been expelled from the Party, while assuring his few non-Communist members that they were masters in their own house. He had very little material with which to carry out the programme before him. The 'National' Committee meetings generally consisted of himself, the faithful Steel, one or two Party men and sometimes, maybe, one or two non-Party—more often far fewer. Steel would go through the farce of reading and signing minutes and putting motions that the Party Fraction had already decided on. At conferences, even 'national', the attendance was usually about twenty or fewer. A few unions were 'affiliated'. It was easy then to get an affiliation: the few who attended union meetings would be apt to vote for any affiliation an active member wanted—to humour him—provided that he was willing in return to help them in another direction, that there was no apparent danger in the affiliation,

and that there was no strenuous opposition. This was the apprentice stage of the Party—learning to manipulate inert masses.

In 1932, the Comintern decided to stretch its wings wider. Events in the Far East—Japanese invasion of Manchuria, for example—the French alliances in eastern Europe and Stalin's war on the peasants—collectivization, industrialization, mass arrests, trials, famine—made the Kremlin fearful of war or conscious of the danger to itself if war did come in the midst of internal disunity. The Comintern was made to initiate an anti-war congress and to attempt to draw into it wider circles than those usually touched by Communist propaganda and influence.

Upon Henri Barbusse devolved the task of issuing the call for the Congress which met in Amsterdam towards the end of August. But we were still in the throes of the madness of the Third Period—when every Social Fascist head that was raised had to be smashed. It was difficult in those circumstances to get the Social Fascists to attend the Congress and the delightful consequence was that they—in the persons of the leaders of the Labour and Socialist International—were, in the inevitable *Manifesto*, castigated for their declared hostility to it. Nothing delighted Communists more in those days than to manoeuvre Social Fascists into acting according to the prescribed behaviour of Social Fascists and then gleefully exclaiming: 'See!'

Moreover, not only was associating with 'respectable' people then very difficult for Communists, but they lacked skill and will to disguise their real aims, thoughts and feelings. They learned slowly. At the rostrum of the Congress sat the Communists, Cachin, Barbusse, Muenzenburg, Tom Mann and others, representatives of the German Communist Red Front Fighters were there in force, banners appealed to all to 'Defend the Soviet Union', delegates 'represented' South American Republics which were 'struggling against US imperialism', the Friends of the Soviet Union later boasted that one-third of all delegates were members of their organization and the whole audience stood to cheer the banner sent by the Russian delegation that had been refused admission into Holland—by such means did the Comintern in 1932 seek to stage an anti-*war* congress. The Communists have learned much since those days.

The Congress *Manifesto* reflected the Comintern's purpose: 'all capitalist Powers treat the Soviet Union as their common enemy which they are attempting to undermine and overthrow'; Congress honoured the 'steadfast peace policy' of Russia; a

declaration was made against the Versailles treaties which ascribed 'the sole responsibility to Germany'—this the only mention of Germany in *Manifesto*—every imperialist Power was preparing for war: USA, England, France, Japan, Italy—no mention of Germany—the 'leading role' being 'played by French imperialism', the delegates were warned against the League of Nations, 'which functions at Geneva as an immediate mouthpiece of the imperialist Powers', and against the misleaders of the Socialist International. An appeal was made to 'hand and brain workers' to struggle against war 'regardless of the ideological and political differences' and to 'face facts and facts only': one 'fact' being that the war in the colonies—in India, Morocco, Nicaragua, China—was a defensive war 'against the armed forces of imperialist profiteers'.

France then was the arch-enemy and all the Communist Parties—and the Congress—echoed the Kremlin hysteria. The French and German Parties issued a joint manifesto denouncing the Versailles Treaty, as Hitler was then doing, as weighing 'down on the toilers of vanquished Germany with a crushing burden of misery' and oppressing 'countless millions' in Central Europe. France was piling up armaments on the 'pretext of security'. The Social Democratic leaders were 'attempting with fresh pacifist manoeuvres to hold back the masses from the real fight against imperialism'. The Communists were churning out millions of words for a veritable feast in the near future: in a year or two they would have to eat them all! Germany would then change places with France as the war-mongering nation—after Hitler had spurned Stalin's approaches and attempted courting of the new Nazi regime.

The sections of the Comintern received their instructions and, after the Amsterdam Congress, set about organizing local and national conferences. The Party here handed over the task to the LAI. Its machinery was strengthened by the expedient of putting more Party members to work in it and soon the campaign was under way. Names were sought to grace letterheads and invitations. Comrades had to cease for the nonce to hit at social-fascist heads, wipe off the dust and blood of battle and approach respectable people. It was an assignment both unexpected and unwelcome. First, Party rolls were combed through for names that were entitled to the half-forgotten appendages of degrees and military decorations. Jack Simpson of the Central Committee emerged refurbished as ex-Sergeant-Major, with a DCM and MM, and there were Dr O'Day and the inevitable Katharine Susannah Prichard, with her name inevitably spelt wrongly—

but in only two of the usual three places. The majority of the provisional committee was made up of Communists and fellow-travellers. In addition there were they who, in those days, could always be called upon to co-operate: Dr Rivett, pacifist clergyman; Senator A. Rae and E.J.Ward, MHR, Labor politicians; A.E.Chapman, ARU Secretary, and J.B.Steel, soon to find that his LAI had slipped away from him. The few fish caught by the more widely cast nets made up the total of twenty-five, of which no more than four—and they Communists—carried out the daily tasks and the work of organizing the conference.

The monthly organ of the LAI, *World Survey*, in its issue of February, 1933, issued a call for local committees and conferences, for propaganda and organization in preparation for a state conference and, later, a national. No time was to be lost, war was raging in the East, its extension to Europe was 'but a matter of convenience to the imperialists', the Soviet Union was 'in grave danger of a mad attack in the spring'. The task of getting local non-Communists to lend their names was proceeded with, the NSW State Conference was held in April and the National in September. The same manifesto that Amsterdam had issued was reissued here. The Movement Against War came into being.

Propaganda during 1933 and 1934 sought to show how Australia was preparing war—even the Victorian Centenary Celebrations, the visit of the Duke of Gloucester and the air race to Australia were parts of the war preparations. But, by the following year, the 'peace-loving', as distinct from the war-mongering, capitalist nations were losing their bellicosity: the USSR joined the League of Nations in 1934, negotiations begun between France and Russia the same year ended with the Franco-Soviet Pact of May, 1935, and the Seventh World Conference of the Comintern, of July and August, shaped the strategy of courting the democratic Powers, building a front against Germany, with which Stalin would sooner have come to terms, and throwing overboard all the ballast necessary for the Communist Parties to rise even to dizzy bourgeois heights. The declaration issued jointly by Stalin and Laval stated: 'M.Stalin understands and fully approves the measures of national defence taken by France to raise its armaments to the level of its security.' Now French Communists could vote for war and armaments credits.

In the meantime, in Australia, the LAI, accoucheur, having brought the MAW into being, what of its own future? It continued the farce of offering help, space in its paper and speakers

to the new body. But, in November, a Party Commission sat to consider the whole question. On 2 December, the august decision of the Central Committee of the Party was handed down, to be implemented by the Party Fraction. The LAI's lamentable failure as a mass organization was recognized. Its monthly organ was the only live thing in it—except poor J.B.Steel, utterly unconscious of the contemplated suffocation of his baby—and it had to prepare the way for a new monthly to be published by the MAW and then go out of existence. How? The directive ran:

> The CC has decided on the line indicated by the commission. The method to be followed is largely to let the name die. The only announcement to be made is one in *World Survey* indicating that owing to the intention of the National Committee Against Imperialist War to publish a newspaper the LAI has decided to cease publication and leave a clear field for the newspaper and calls upon all supporters of *World Survey* to assist the new paper. To risk raising all sorts of questions and having to explain about what is practically non-existent will be harmful. The LAI is in fact absorbed. . . . Carefully drop the name LAI.

One wonders whether J.B.Steel ever found out what became of the LAI. The directive was carried out: the LAI was forgotten and the *World Survey* made way for *War! What For?* In the meantime, another conference had been convened in Europe, this time directed against Fascism. The two bodies set up united into one. Of course, we had to follow suit. But were we to work up another conference, do the whole thing over again for the sake of Fascism? No, said J.B.Miles and his edict became law: just quietly add the words 'and Fascism' to our title! We became the Movement Against War and Fascism, by a stroke of the pen. None of the 'masses' we'd mobilized protested.

The MAW & F went on its way making, however, little progress. Leaflets would call meetings in the name of individuals, some of whom got their names thereon without giving their consent. A public meeting would be called, with the announcement that 'the following have been invited to speak. . . .' Whether they refused or did not reply their names were still on the leaflet. The ALP were not long in branding the Movement as merely one more Communist subsidiary. 'Campaigns' were waged, with inadequate forces and finance—the question of finance would constitute another and interesting story—arousing sometimes more or less mass interest: periodical State and National conferences, sending a delegate to the Women's Conference in Paris, for the release of Kisch and Griffin in 1935, collecting for aid to the Spanish Government during the Spanish Civil War.

The MAW & F, though the broadest-based organization that

the Party had controlled, was still not broad enough. Its influence was practically negligible and, besides, Comintern ambitions were soaring.

In 1936, when the Axis Powers were growing in strength, the Kremlin decided that an effort should be made to set up a new organization, one so respectable that none would dare to brand it as a Communist body. Under the new plan even labour politicians and trade union officials would be lesser fry, too far to the left for the Communists to be happy with. The nets were to be thrown wider in order to gather in Duchesses and Peers, Deans and Bishops and men and women of the highest respectability.

Early in the year, a preparatory conference was arranged in Geneva, apparently through Romain Rolland, and it was decided to call a World Peace Conference for September. Lord Robert Cecil and Pierre Cot, Minister for Air in the French Popular Front Government, were to be the joint convenors. Whatever means were adopted to bring these two, whose sincerity is not impugned, and others, together with the Communist-controlled World Committee Against War and Fascism, it remains true that the co-operation *was* brought about and continued through the following years. Lord Cecil possibly thought he was using the Communists; they were sure they were using him.

On 8 May, the National Committee of the MAW & F in Sydney received the following telegram from the World Committee in Paris:

> International Preparatory Conference Geneva Chairman Lord Cecil decided convocation World Peace Congress September trois quatre cinq. Urge you concentrate immediately forces for campaign large representative delegations. World Committee Romain Langevin.

Professor Langevin was world president of the Movement.

This meant that we had been informed of the proposed World Peace Congress and of the fact that Lord Cecil was to convene it before he himself had made a move, and were being instructed in advance of any other body to set going an organization to send a delegation. We would be the prime movers.

The Communist Fraction of the MAW & F immediately discussed plans to set up an International Peace Campaign Committee. We saw that our first job was to get hold of persons widely acceptable and untinged with Communism, or with association with Communists, to send out invitations to a conference. The present writer was given the job of setting the whole thing moving. He had our eyes on the Right Reverend E.H. Burgmann, Bishop of Goulburn. I had met him before he

became Bishop and he had long flitted around the fringe of Communist subsidiaries but had shilly-shallied about allowing us to use his name for the MAW & F. Moreover, he had written an article for *War! What For?* which I had trenchantly criticized. So, I could not approach him.

Through one, A.E.Eichler, a Party member, who delighted in trying to convert to Communism those he called the 'petty-bourgeois', I became acquainted with a Mr Symmington, one of a circle around the Reverend Stuart Watts, editor of the *Church Standard*. Soon I became friendly with Watts, an unassuming and earnest gentleman, a liberal and a humanist, and we invited each other to write for our respective papers. Mr Symmington arranged that he, Stuart Watts, the Reverend Roy Lee, of the Morpeth Theological College where Burgmann had been Rector, and myself should have lunch together. We did—at what was then the 'Dungowan' in Martin Place. Naturally, talk rapidly crystallized around the international situation and I mentioned that Lord Cecil was contemplating calling an International Peace Congress. I did not have to urge that something should be done here about it and soon the two clergymen said they were willing to sign an invitation. Bishop Burgmann's name was mentioned—obviously, it had to be—the obtaining of his signature was to be precedent to their putting theirs to the invitation.

I had now to get the Bishop's signature. I composed the letter of invitation and it was sent to the Bishop, together with a letter urging him to sign it, by the late David G. Stead, a scientist, a past president of the League of Nations Union, one who called himself a socialist and who was sympathetic to our Movement. Burgmann signed. Then, with his signature and those of Stead, Lee and Stuart Watts, the invitations went out. We were only too ready to do all the work necessary and they were sent to Church and Women's organizations, the League of Nations Union, trade unions, political parties and prominent individuals.

Raymond G. Watt, Secretary of the League of Nations Union, received an invitation but was suspicious. He was justified in doubting. The only information he had received about the proposed conference, he said, was from 'leftist' sources. The previous year I had debated him publicly on the question of the efficacy of the League of Nations as a safeguard against war and now here was my organization supporting Cecil and the League. I told him to cable Lord Cecil for verification. He did so and received a confirmatory reply, which I saw. Thereafter Watt was

hole-hearted in his support of the International Peace Cam-
aign, as it came to be called. Stead was the only one of the four
onsors who took any further part in the campaign.

As a result of the invitations the called meeting was duly
eld in Sydney. There was a good roll-up—many of those
tending had never before been associated with Communists.
he meeting decided to go ahead with the Campaign and a
mmittee was formed. I was nominated as secretary, by Stead
think, and elected, but it was not desirable that I should remain
the position. So, after a meeting or two, I resigned with the
cuse of pressure of work—which was, indeed, not an excuse
ut true. We were 'fortunate': at the very same meeting at
hich I resigned a newcomer said, in reply to a call for volunteers,
at he was prepared to devote his time to the thankless job of
cretary. His offer was accepted by the members—I had
othing to say—and Mr Greenfield was installed as the new
cretary. No one but the Communists knew that our welcomed
lunteer was a member of the Communist Party, instructed
the Party to attend the meeting and take the position. Nor
d the others find out.

The most effective workers on the Committee were Com-
unists, unknown as such, though others, like Mrs Jessie Street
d Miss Ruby Rich of certain women's organizations were
tive. Later a Communist woman succeeded Greenfield as
cretary, and her assistant was another Communist woman.
us the Party held the key positions, surreptitiously, and we
re kept informed of developments or proposals that might
t suit our purpose. Otherwise we remained quiet. Our aim
s not to have any trials of strength, but to make the best of
at we were able to get. Tom Wright, a member of the Central
mmittee of the Party, was generally present at meetings of the
mmittee, openly as a member of the Party, or I was there.
e meetings were sparsely attended and, at times, we might
in a majority. But we wanted all moves to come from the
n-Communists, as far as possible. The fact that there were
mmunists on the Committee, openly as Communists, made
possible for the hidden Communists to wield more influence.
t, after all, there was a wide field for agreement amongst
the members. The Communist Party had cast aside all its
volutionary talk and programme and was content, in the main,
give life to a group that without its initiative would not have
come active. And the direction of the movement? As far as
e non-Communists were concerned, to preserve the peace;
the Communists, to help build a ring around Germany

for the protection of the Soviet Union. The revolution was to be laid aside. 'If in this period you make your revolution in France,' one of Stalin's emissaries was telling the French socialist youth around this time, 'you are traitors.'

The Party got to work in the other States and the IPC was got going there. In Victoria it was possibly drawn in even wider circles than in New South Wales. We decided to send a delegation to the World Congress, but the raising of the necessary funds was very difficult. In fact, I don't think sufficient funds were ever raised in New South Wales and the delegate had to rely on his own resources or on those of his own organization. The delegate we chose was Raymond Watt and he duly left to represent us. Ralph Gibson, a leading Communist, was sent from Victoria. From that State, too, went the Reverend Palmer Phillips, but whether the IPC financed his trip or not I do not know.

The IPC was not regarded as a new independent body, but a kind of uniting organ, in which all participating bodies could co-operate without losing their identities. This was preferable from our point of view. While maintaining our own existence, we could the more easily provide the driving force within the IPC, without being accused of being synonymous with it. Moreover, we could give a fuller or more radical interpretation of IPC decisions.

When Gibson returned, he brought with him knowledge of tactics and future plans as gained from his discussions with our own World Committee and Party fractions. He prepared two reports, one for general consumption and the other—which I have in front of me as I write, partly in his meticulous, small handwriting—for the eyes of the Party leadership. It is enlightening, for sceptics, because it shows how individuals and organizations can be manipulated by people who have graduated from courses in manipulation. For example, the Melbourne Trades Hall would have nothing to do with an organization in which the 'banned organizations' (Communist Party and its subsidiaries) co-operated. The Reverend Palmer Phillips, with influence there, tried to get them to change their attitude. But if he cannot do so, argues Gibson, he should accept their decision and agree to keep the banned bodies out of the new Peace Council that was being formed. Why this self-denial? Because . . .

> It would not in fact deprive us of representation on the new Council, on which there would still be (if the World Peace Congress Committee can be taken as a guide) Doris McRae from Teachers' Union, Joyce Warren (Methodist Youth Peace Committee), Sharpley (Social Science Forum), Max Brown (Youth Front) and representatives from Writers'

> League, Student League and Teachers' Peace Movement. If Trade Unions and ALP local organizations were separately represented, this would bring a further wide range of seats under our influence.

Shut the doors, they're coming through the windows!

If, because of Trades Hall recalcitrance, Gibson goes on, we have to follow this course, look at our gains:

> we avoid political wrangles that might otherwise break the Peace Movement

and

> The THC and ALP become part of an international movement in which the 'banned organizations' play a prominent part

though surreptitiously.

Dorothy Alexander, a 'capable organizer', must be a member and, if possible, secretary of the new council. How will we get her in?

> In the absence of representation from the MAW & F there would be two ways of securing her inclusion. The first would be her election by some other organization (which could probably be arranged) and the second would be her inclusion as one of the *convenors* [Gibson's emphasis] of the Council.

Gibson indicated that a tight hold could be kept on Palmer Phillips and that he could be guided. Work to influence other organizations was going on:

> Steps are being prepared to penetrate from below the main bourgeois organizations in the Peace Movement—LNU, WCTU, YMCA, YWCA, and Women's Citizens' Movement—with a view to pressure on the leadership of these organizations to participate in the Peace Movement more actively.

So, a lesson: a delegate to a peace conference from a Methodist Youth Committee or the Women's Christian Temperance Union is not necessarily a non-Communist.

The Australian unions were opposed to the idea of collective security and the implementation of League of Nations sanctions. The Party was in a quandry. At the instance of the Soviet Foreign Office, acting through the Communist International and in the interests of Russian foreign policy, it had adopted a policy of supporting both, but did not want to lose what influence it had in the trade unions. These might, however, listen to what European unions advised on the matter. Gibson, therefore, asked for aid. The World Committee Against War and Fascism, run by Communists, was asked to ask the IPC, allegedly run by Lord Cecil, to bring pressure to bear on European trade union supporters of the IPC to bring pressure to bear on Australian unions! A very round-about way. Clemens Dutt, the well-known English Communist, masquerading then as an official of the MAW & F, wrote me on 19 January, 1937, that the matter had been attended to:

> We have received a letter from Mr Gibson in which he asked us to take up with the International Peace Campaign the question of a direct approach from the trade union section of the IPC to the Australian trade union movement. This matter has been raised with the international secretariat of the IPC, and we would be glad if you would inform Mr Gibson that international secretariat has promised to take the necessary action.

With what result I know not.

As Gibson saw it, the task of the IPC was to rouse people to the danger of war, while the MAW & F was to guide the opposition to war thus aroused in the desired direction. One complaint of his was that the IPC in its declaration—'our one foe: the aggressor'—did not name the aggressor. Ralph wanted the aggressor named before the aggression! That would have precluded, for example, the condemnation of Russia for the attack on Finland. The MAW & F, however, knew how to fill in the gaps: Germany was obviously the aggressor and their speakers on IPC platforms could guide IPC conditional condemnation in the direction of Germany.

Till the end of 1939! By that time the friendship of Stalin and Hitler had been sealed in blood and there had after all been no need for our peace committees and conferences! Our wasted time and sweat: Britain and France were the aggressors!

J.Normington-Rawling

"THE BULLETIN" AND JIM HEALY

PERHAPS it would be a good thing for Australia if there were a few more "technicalities" governing unions—technicalities guaranteeing clean ballots, changes of union rules and the conduct of union meetings . . . Suggestions of this kind are attacked not only by Communist unionists and their undercover men and dupes but also by sincerely traditionalist unionists as interference with the freedom of unions . . but it is merely an extension of democratic procedures to insist that . . unions should follow a few basic rules in the conduct of their affairs in the interests . . . of union members. The conduct of union affairs is one of the critical issues for democracy in Australia. Its seriousness is not generally known because the facts are not generally known. There could be no better subject for a Royal Commission than an inquiry into union procedures. In unions such as the Waterside Workers' Federation and the Seamen's Union this kind of inquiry would reveal such hair-raising methods that there would be a national outcry for reform; and most of the outcry would come from good unionists. Perhaps the Royal Commission would also commemorate the name of Jim Healy.—*From "The Exploitation of Jim Healy,"* THE BULLETIN, *August 12, 1961.*

SANDOR PAPP

Desmond O'Grady

BILLY GRAHAM may have saved many souls in Melbourne but he nearly ruined Sandor Papp. Perhaps Billy was not greatly to blame, he merely provoked the spark that set the chimney alight; a steady fire had already been burning below for many years. It must have been a rabid blaze during Sandor's time as one of Admiral Horthy's Arrow Cross guard in his native Hungary. If it had not been for the application of Dr Graham's powerful bellows, however, it might have burned away until Sandor was slowly consumed without the spectacular uprush of flames, without the shower of sparks which scattered in all directions for a brilliant moment and then faded.

For Sandor, Billy's arrival was like the descent of one of the Gods. It was too much for Sandor who was still a mere mortal, even though there were no limits to his aspirations. These aspirations were the cause of all his distress, for they went beyond the possible and probable. He was the lowest of the low, he sometimes felt, as a clerk in the Department of the Commonwealth Public Service. At times he tried to console himself, with the thought that his was not such a bad position to have, really, after only eight years in the country and, moreover, he was preparing for the examination which would enable him to become permanent. But this Public Service was nothing compared to the glories of the Austro-Hungarian bureaucracy which he could almost remember, and was still less compared with his imminent glory.

His notepaper announced his ambition. It was headed Sandor Papp, Master of Commerce and Economics (Prague), Business Consultant, 138 Whitehouse Road, Melbourne, agents in Des Moines, Iowa, and Drayton, Ohio, USA. But his ambitions were not merely commercial. He had a message for the world, he wanted to wake people to the twin perils of international Communism and international Jewry. To this end he had prepared some hard-hitting pamphlets, and was hoping to make a lecture tour of America shortly denouncing the entwined evils. He had written to many prominent Americans, most recently to the president of the Minnesota Railroad Company, requesting sponsorship for his trip. As long as they replied he was happy, even though it was invariably along these lines: 'Although I

read your letter and the enclosed pamphlets with interest, Dr Papp, I do not see how I can help you in your ambitions. . . .'

Long before anyone else in the office had heard of Billy Graham, Sandor was in contact with him. He had written to Graham approving of his work, asking him to campaign here and advising that an organization should be established to carry it on after the Doctor's departure. Sandor's qualifications, experience and abilities were such that he had suggested himself as splendidly suited to head the organization.

He had sent that letter to Graham long before there was talk of him making an Australian tour. When there was no response to his letter Sandor was offended but Malachi humoured him with the suggestion that Billy Graham's eye trouble might have prevented him replying. Then came the news that Billy Graham was to visit Melbourne. Sandor felt as if someone had sploshed a handful of snow against the small of his bare back as he read that item. One of the Powers he solicited by letter was actually coming to Melbourne; and it seemed—Sandor wrestled against the idea but it did seem possible—that he might have been the cause of Dr Graham's coming.

He conveyed part of his excitement to Malachi, but only part of it for although Sandor was always talking his words were not adequate to his feelings, besides Malachi would not understand. Malachi was only a youth. Not that Sandor did not have faith in youth: he believed that they were the hope of the world. He had no hopes for the older generation, half dead, complacent and conformist as it was, deaf to any idealism.

Malachi's grandfather had come to Australia from Genoa and Malachi was sailing for Italy in six months' time. A sharp-faced, quick-witted young man he regarded Sandor's enthusiasms with an amused tolerance. He was neat and dressed with style as a protest, it seemed, against the drabness of the office.

It was a human drabness: drab clothes, drab characters, drab minds. It annoyed Sandor who felt there should be some poverty, and some splendour instead of this dead level of mediocrity. Office talk was always of gardening, sport, babies, family troubles, the whole suburban apparatus. Sandor spoke occasionally of his family, he told Malachi that he cooked the evening meal and prepared the family's lunches as he did not want to overwork his wife, and he mentioned that his son Imre was studying for his carpentry degree at Swinburne Technical school. But he was not all the time retailing the latest news of his wife, Imre, and his daughter Kyra. He had lived, he could recount his European experiences, stories of Budapest, Munich, Paris, and

he had ideas in his head, theories of history, so that, unlike the others, he did not have to wait for the *Sun* each day to provide his topic of conversation.

So he told Malachi as they sat shuffling files at their adjacent desks. He held forth at morning tea break which would last twenty-five minutes as Sandor placed in its historical perspective the news of the day. Sandor despaired of the Australians' ignorance: he would ask what was the date of the battle of Austerlitz, and then, when they had answered with blank stares, ask what date St Kilda defeated Collingwood at Collingwood. Before anyone could reply he would rap out an imaginary answer, say, 5 July, 1938. Apart from the twenty-five minute morning and afternoon tea breaks Sandor, like many others, would steal out for half-an-hour every so often to shop or just to walk around the city to break the boredom.

No one could foresee a term to Sandor's happy discontent, his impatience with his impassive colleagues, his expectations of an American lecture tour and his collection of letters refusing sponsorship, his half-hour escapades, his small talk in the corridors—'I am reading last night a book of Bertrand Russell, I like this subject, metaphysics, I think, very much, do you know any other books about it?'—his mimicry, with Malachi, of the rest of the staff during the tea breaks. But then Malachi decided to play a practical joke.

A friend of Malachi's had received in the post an invitation to prepare for the coming of Billy Graham. This friend's parents had been Protestant missionaries in China but he was a sceptic. Those who had sent the letter were evidently unaware of this: there was a preamble of praise for his zeal in the past, an eulogy of the evangelist followed, and it concluded with the suggestion that a prayer cell be established at work to prepare the ground for Billy. When Malachi's friend showed him the letter as a curiosity he saw immediately where it would be really appreciated. He put it in a new envelope and addressed it to Sandor Papp.

The next day Sandor insisted that Malachi read the letter. 'Zis is vunderful,' he said, smashing his fist into the cupped palm of his other hand. His short, broad-shouldered figure moved with a new briskness, he radiated pleasure at this recognition, his green eyes were alight, his wrinkled brow wrinkled more than ever.

The call was clear and Sandor was not slow to respond. He immediately approached Bill Connelly as he considered him most in need of joining a prayer cell. An occasional Catholic, Bill

in blunt language told Sandor exactly what he thought of him, his ideas and his Billy Graham prayer cell. Swinging from the Catholics to the Masons Sandor next put the idea to Phil Gerbing who did not say either yes or no but just went on chewing gum, a blob of spiritual immobility. Sandor erred in approaching these first two and he erred again, infallibly and more disastrously, with his third and final choice, Mr Warwick.

Sandor decided that the men needed leadership in this matter and who better than the section leader, Mr Warwick, to set them an example. He took the opportunity to broach the subject when he had to take some files to Mr Warwick. Sandor has his own way of expressing himself and for some time Mr Warwick did not understand a word of what Sandor was saying. At first he tried to see its connection with the work of the office but after a while Sandor's talk of 'cells' alarmed him—it was a matter for ASIO (the secret police) if there was a Communist cell in the office. He was just beginning to understand the burden of it all when he noticed that one of the files tucked under Sandor's arm bore a Ministerial tag. At the sight of it Mr Warwick broke out in a rash of anxiety and, telling Sandor to keep his mind on his work, warned him not to waste time in the office evangelizing.

Sandor brooded over his rejection. He cursed his colleagues' indifference to the message and in revenge set about, with Malachi, dividing the staff into three categories. Firstly there were the BCCL's: bored but couldn't care less. Like poor beasts of burden they did their work without enjoyment or enthusiasm. Sandor could never forgive these small men in small jobs for being resigned to their fate. Phil Gerbing was the prime example. Because he had a friend in the right place he had been sent to Italy as an Immigration selection officer but that had not made any difference to him. Admittedly he could slobber about Italian women on his return but he was still his unreconstructed self. As always he masticated gum with a relentless rotary action, his face was blotchy, his lapels dark with stains. He kept pies in his desk like a schoolboy and nibbled at them all day. One day, in the near future he was to go to the doctor and on his return leave the office saying he had been pensioned off. Two pies, one mildewed and the other half-gnawed, were found in his desk after his departure.

The next category was that of the SF's and the AI's—the sexual frustrates and the alcoholics ignominious. Bill Connelly was the first to come to Sandor's mind as a candidate although he was a bachelor and most of the SFAI's were married men or unmarried women. Jocose and greying Bill, boss of the mail

room, spent much time manoeuvring girls into corners, or furtively squeezing them in the lift, or kissing them whenever he could create anything like a suitable opportunity. Bill suffered acutely from the pangs of thirst and during his bad periods his address for some hours each day was the nearby pub.

The third category into which Sandor and Malachi divided their colleagues was that of the squared K, the keen and curt. They were convinced of the importance of their work, they dreamed of promotion, of being called to Canberra, of their career within the service. They measured their progress by the additional superannuation scheme units they took yearly.

Sandor took a savage delight in describing the squared K's because Mr Warwick was the prototype. Thin and sharp, as if corroded by the inner acid of his nerves, he sat, brimming with enthusiasm, in his glass-partitioned cage, his glittering eye sometimes sweeping over the clerks outside. Not that he would rouse at slack individuals, rather he would devise new systems to make them work more. He aimed to be an efficiency expert, an organization-and-methods robot, and he must have dreamt of the perfect system which would make everyone work continuously at full capacity.

He constantly rearranged the section's work but the result was always the same because of the passive resistance of the BCCL's and the incompetence of the SFAI's. He was amiable enough with the boys at morning tea break and they made allowances for his zeal; besides Malachi had his measure and everyone was aware of it. As had happened in Sandor's case, Warwick threw a minor fit whenever a file bearing a Ministerial tag was brought to him, so Malachi made sure he got one at regular intervals by resubmitting for an early date files in which there had been Ministerial correspondence and by attaching the tag on more files than necessary. All the section would await the scream and the flurry: 'Who put this file on my desk, how long has it been here, a letter has to be sent to Canberra about this. . . .'

Sandor derived satisfaction from having assigned his unresponsive colleagues to their proper categories and Malachi thought that would be the end of the matter. But then Billy Graham arrived. Malachi did not realize what Billy Graham's visit meant to Sandor. He thought that Sandor's interest was entirely due to that passion for celebrities which had made him follow Fred Astaire along Collins Street for three blocks.

The morning after the opening meeting of the crusade Malachi asked Sandor whether he had attended. 'Yes,' said Sandor, 'and

I declared myself.' 'You can't do that Sandor,' protested Malachi, 'you're a Catholic aren't you?' 'I am a freethinking Catholic,' explained Sandor proudly, 'not like these Australian Catholics.'

He told Malachi how he had been the first to reach the stage, how, with the others who had declared themselves, he was taken backstage where each had been matched with a counsellor of approximately the same age, outlook, intelligence and occupational level. He, Sandor, had been matched with a salesman from Myers but after half-an-hour the salesman retired and called a university undergraduate to talk with Sandor. After another half-hour, when nearly all the others had left, the undergraduate called in the star man of the troupe, a university lecturer, who was still listening to Sandor's explanation of history when everyone else had gone home.

But Sandor did not tell Malachi, because he could see that he would not understand, of his feeling of release as Dr Graham began to speak, of his feeling of exultation as the evangelist carried the crowd with him, of his disappointment when he did not meet Dr Graham in person behind the stage but instead the salesman and the university pair. He had been first to the stage, partly because he wanted to help Dr Graham by setting an example, but most of all because he thought Dr Graham would give him an answer to the letter he had sent him so many months ago.

He did not miss one of Graham's meetings but he said little to Malachi about them. His abortive attempt to form a prayer cell had convinced him the office needed Dr Graham's influence and as each night at the Crusade increased his desire to show allegiance to the evangelist he spent his days staring at files without seeing them. He was asking himself how he should act.

The answer came to him like a command and he obeyed immediately. He entered Mr Warwick's office and made a clean breast of everything—of the twenty-five minute morning and afternoon tea breaks, of the half-hours spent shopping or strolling and, if this was not enough, he exaggerated on his pilfering of office stationery ware. Mr Warwick would not have been more flustered if someone had thrust a Ministerial file before him. 'We are all guilty,' Sandor concluded. Mr Warwick knew from experience that it was fatal to argue with Sandor so when he had recovered from his initial surprise he told Sandor that he expected an improvement in his work in future.

Sandor returned unhappily to his desk. Mr Warwick had wanted to silence him, that was all. He, the leader, stood in the way of the spiritual renewal of the other clerks.

These other clerks were immediately aware of Sandor's confession and they started to consult among themselves as to how they should punish the scab. They were still conferring when a memorandum to all officers under Mr Warwick circularized throughout the section. It pointed out that the morning and afternoon tea breaks should be of not more than ten minutes duration, that officers were not permitted to leave the office without permission during working hours, and that pilfering would be punished. Sandor saw with anguish that his call for a change of heart had been bureaucratized by Mr Warwick into an efficiency drive. He said this to Malachi but, to his surprise, there was no reponse; however it was not until he had spoken to Phil Gerbing and two or three others that he realized no one would speak to him.

Within a few days Sandor was heartily sick of coming to an office where all ignored him, where there was a greeting and talk for everyone but himself, where they treated him as if he were a Jew. But after Dr Graham's revelation what did these mediocrities matter to him? Sandor knew he was one of the elect, he lived by the spirit and not by the flesh. He would not let these penpushers persecute him even though it was their damned country.

As always he reached his decision suddenly and, without further thought, acted. He handed in his resignation.

Instantly he felt his mastery over his enemies of the office for he had liberated himself from them. He would answer their silence by scorn and nothing would mitigate his sternness; he was sure he would be unbending, more resolute in this than the Dr Graham of the final rally held in the Myer Music Bowl.

Sandor had cut sandwiches the morning of that rally to enable him to go straight to the Music Bowl from work, even though the big show did not commence until 8 pm. He munched his lamb and lettuce sandwiches and enjoyed the slow accretion of the crowd while awaiting the start, anticipating the day that he likewise would draw thousands.

When Dr Graham launched into his speech Sandor gave his whole-hearted endorsement to every word. The evangelist was telling the listeners that they were sinners and Sandor applied it all to his colleagues. How could they treat him as if he did not exist? He had only thought of helping them. He was different from them, just as Dr Graham was different from all these people who had come to hear him. Sandor wondered whether Dr Graham was contemptuous of them. For that was his feeling, he told himself, towards those clerks who had shown they existed on a lower level than he did.

Dr Graham was at the climax of his address theatening the crowd that they would be punished for their sins on Judgment Day. Arm upraised, erect on the peak of his power and eloquence, he was an awesome figure when suddenly it seemed the sky rolled back and an apocalyptic trumpet sounded. Dr Graham or, in a flash, he seemed even to Sandor just Billy Graham, gagged, mouth open but wordless, arm upraised as if caught redhanded in a presumptuous, tasteless parody. It seemed seven times seventy years before the orator found words but it was probably only seventy seconds. But everyone had realized that the cause of the weird illumination and the sudden explosion was the fireworks display at Albert Park Lake, organized as part of the Japanese trade promotion campaign. So although the speechmaker regained his composure like a hardened trouper upset by an importunate prompter Sandor had seen him, for a moment, reduced to the level of his audience.

Sandor was sure that he would act differently; he would not weaken even momentarily in the office. As his final day, Friday, approached he enjoyed a growing sense of triumph over the SFAI's, the BCCL's, the KK's—and Malachi. Malachi, it was true, had spoken to him but it was too late. Sandor did not respond, he would not have responded if Mr Warwick, with Phil Gerbing, Bill Connelly and the whole clerks' union had come and begged him to address them. Malachi was included in the general anathema because he had not spoken to and for Sandor as soon as he had been labelled scab. Well, Sandor had no time for him, he hated the lukewarm.

These Australians thought they were tough but he would show them what tough meant. He would not cede a syllable in this war of silence. Sandor marched into the recreation room at tea time as if he were parading in Admiral Horthy's guard. As he prepared his sandwiches each morning he gave himself a preview of the scene and then, at 11 am and 3.30 pm he lived through it, imagining that as they talked of golf, racing, wives and babies all their thoughts were of him sitting silent, drinking his tea from a saucerless white cup and munching his sandwiches. Usually he went out during lunch time but these last three days he stayed in as he believed they were waiting for him to run, to show signs of strain. Far from feeling strain Sandor felt an increasing assurance: he was sure he would win against the Australians and the only thing that worried him was how he could make them feel his victory, how he could thrust it down their throats. There should be some final flourish, some gesture was needed for otherwise, being so slow and so presumptuous,

they would never understand how superior he was. But nothing came to mind: he had worked with them for six years, he had thought they were his friends even when he had made fun of them (he knew now that it was not possible to become friends with these Australians) and now he could not think how to make them aware of his triumph. Sandor trusted that his bearing, his proud silence, would be understood by some of them at least. If no conclusive gesture suggested itself on Friday afternoon he would march off letting them draw their own conclusions and he would be well rid of them.

Like a priest or a soldier he fixed himself in a ritual of service, either to prove they were losing a most valuable worker or because he had no one to talk to for twenty-five minutes at the tea breaks, there were no more philosophical discussions in the corridors, no more conferences in the mail room, no more anecdotes exchanged while the files gathered dust. Sandor had iron in the soul. He would be inflexible until the last. Secretly he was happy that things had come to an end, that he was making a clean break. The letter from America should arrive now that he had stopped compromising. He planned to leave his wife and family in Melbourne until he was established in the States as they would never stand the strenuous travel during his lecture trip. That was especially true of his delicate wife, indeed perhaps it was better that she did not come to America at all—the idea had occurred to him many times. He thought of his son and daughter—they had their friends here, he had to admit they were Australians, more likely than not they would want to stay here.

But he would be overjoyed the day he left for America. And now that Friday, the day he was to leave the office, had arrived he regarded it was a prelude to that other departure. Sandor considered the passing of the hours that Friday as so many minor victories and when 4.06 pm arrived he told himself the battle was won. In an hour he would be free. Mr Warwick, Phil Gerbing and Malachi were all working like robots, he wanted to remember them like that, robots who could create only a spiteful atmosphere of hostility.

At half-past-four Sandor made a last attempt to think of a parting gesture which would shake them from their stupid silence, from their self-righteous complacency. But nothing came to mind; he decided that he would even sign the time-book whereas before he had planned to march off and ignore it. No, it would be better to carry out all the formalities with a superior calm, an icy indifference.

About a quarter-to-five Sandor noticed that the other clerks had already begun to put their things away and were grouping near Mr Warwick's office. Then Malachi approached and, leaning over the desk, said quietly, 'We'd like you to come into Warwick's office for a minute Sandor.'

Sandor did not reply. Who was this 'we'? What did they plan to do? Stunned that the Australians had taken the initiative he rose to follow Malachi. Whatever it was he was determined to face it, he would show them he was harder than the whole lot of them put together.

Now he was at the door and despite his apprehension he was struck by the clerks' shabby appearance as they crowded into the room. None of them was poor but they all looked to be descendants of the poor, they all bore the mark of their forebears, the English or Irish labouring classes; no matter how prosperous their damned country became they would never attain any distinction. Mr Warwick stood behind his desk on which four books were piled.

Mr Warwick gazed at the empty desks and smiled thinly at the other clerks while he explained why they had gathered to farewell Sandor. When it was known that he was leaving, these zombies, these BCCL's, these SFAI's and KK's had organized a collection for him. Sandor could imagine them contributing a few shillings in the absent-minded, spiritless, grudging way they did whenever there was an office collection. They had put the money together, Mr Warwick was saying, and knowing that Sandor was such a great reader they had bought him some books which they hoped he would find interesting.

Sandor grasped their tactic now: as soon as Mr Warwick finished he would have to reply. It was a bastard trick but he would not be beaten at this stage. No sooner had he understood than he made his decision and acted on it. He dashed forward to snatch the books and tear off their covers and then hurtled out of the office, along the corridor and, not knowing where to run, into the lavatory where he locked himself in one of the cubicles.

More breathless and heated than he should have been from such a short run he flopped against the wall to consider what he had done. He had won, hadn't he? He had not spoken while they had, they had tried to take the initiative but he had snatched if from them. Why was he so flushed and breathless then in that small cell, feeling no pleasure at the victory but rather a racing confusion? He noticed the books he still held in his hand, he had ripped the cover and some of the pages away from one of

them and only a slight sheaf of pages remained, He glanced at the title, *So You Want to be an Australian?* The other, intact except for the torn dust-jacket, was *They're a Weird Mob.*

When he heard their voices he thought for a moment that they had come to exact revenge but then he recognized that they were merely making their customary washroom visit before leaving the office. But they must know he was there: with a shock he realized that nothing could jolt them alive, they were talking of gardening, of how they would spend the weekend, of the weather forecast, of all the most humdrum matters, of their wives, using the usual set phrases, saying they were tired after the week's work and sounding unshakeable.

Sandor felt a shaft of cold enter his sweating shoulders from the concrete wall. He thought of his wife who now refused to prepare his meals for him, of his children who had not inherited any of their father's fire. He moistened his throat by swallowing, he had a sure sense that he had missed something in life.

'Are you there, Sandor?'

There was Malachi making sure everyone knew where he was. He had trapped himself but he would wait until they had all gone, he was damned if he would come out before, no matter how long they stayed. All of a sudden he sagged with tiredness so he lowered the lavatory seat noiselessly and sat there.

'Bloody funny business,' said a voice and Sandor tried to place it.

'Yair,' was the answer.

'Course all those foreigners are terribly excitable,' the first voice went on. 'Look at Malachi here, he'd just about qualify as a New Australian. When are you off to Itieland, Noel?'

'Six months' time,' said Malachi in a tone which did not invite further conversation.

After some badinage that pair left, but Sandor knew that Malachi remained. It was Malachi he would have to face or hide from eventually. So this was how it had turned out: instead of the clean break he had imagined a miserable undignified hide-and-seek in the office lavatory. But this was not the only disappointment Sandor felt as he sat with his elbows on his knees and his forehead supported by the palm of his hands.

The ablutions and sluicings had come to a standstill and now there was only Malachi outside, silent. Then Sandor heard the door open again.

'I smell a rat.' Sandor recognized the gravelly voice of Bill Connelly. 'Waiting for friends, Noel?' asked Connelly, in a knowing voice. Sandor waited on Malachi's reply.

After a pause he heard Malachi answer, 'Yes.'

'I thought you and your mate would be here,' said Connelly with the sly laugh submerged in his voice, 'they told me this was where the heads hung out.' He chuckled in enjoyment of his wit as he left.

'Come on Sandor,' said Malachi, 'I've brought your other two books along for you. There's one of Bertrand Russell's and one on Billy Graham.' Sandor thought of Billy Graham with his arm upraised in an imperious gesture but suddenly reduced to humble proportions by an apocalyptic roll of fireworks, just as he himself had been reduced from his proud superiority to a frenzied rabbit by the SFAI's, the BCCL's and the KK's.

'Are you coming out or are you going to spend the week end there Sandor?'

Sandor felt in his pocket for the letter he had received that afternoon. He had his mail delivered to the office because his wife was always annoyed when correspondence about his lecture tour arrived at home. It was from the mayor of Buffalo and began: 'Dear Dr Papp although I read your letter and the enclosed pamphlets with interest I do not see how I can help you in your ambitions. . . .'

He tore it as noiselessly as possible into small pieces and placed it in the water closet. Then he opened the door and faced Malachi who was lounging in the corner. Malachi handed him the two books and studied Sandor with a good deal of uncertainty. Sandor stood stock still for a minute before saying: 'I wish I was going to Italy with you.'

Desmond O'Grady

TWO POEMS

Charles Doyle

PHIALS

If only to be born were being invented
Merely or, better still, to concoct oneself
From an antique alembic, a receipt. How splendid
To take the phial cleanly from its shelf;

Powders and liquids, all one's favourite hues
Making the being one would be, the looker at stars
Or storks on the spires of Denmark, drinker of dews,
Or an eye simply, peering through deep green trees

With still, black quality, age, settlement. Pictures
Of an idyllic sort immediately come;
But some obstinacy of intellect, demanding structures
Complete, all details carefully trim,

Will take down the last bottle, thick as glue,
Mingle it into the potion, and for all the good
It does, as well had nothing been done. The new
And perfect formula's spoiled, with the taint of living blood.

DETENTE

Faced with the permutations,
Confronted by systems urging us towards heaven,
Schemes for our well-being, salvation,
Our greater emancipation, for being given

Voices and votes, something to say
About freedom, equality, the means of destroying ourselves
Unlet, we tend to forget that all reality
Is anarchy because of the differences

Of thing from thing, that no alliances
Prevent the drifting away, idly,
singly, of the dead leaves.

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THE MALAISE OF RICHARD MAHONY

Jennifer Dallimore

'BY COMMON critical consent,' a recent writer suggests, 'our greatest novelist is Henry Handel Richardson.' And certainly this *is* the kind of judgment we hear and read about Richardson. For one thing, it is vague enough to describe the impressive bulk and scope, the passionate intensity of her work, without in any way evaluating it. For another, it directs attention to the fact that Richardson's most important book, *The Fortunes of Richard Mahony*, displays what might appear to be a kind of *representative* greatness. It deals on a large scale with peculiarly Australian conditions—with certain themes and conflicts implicit in our historical development.

I'm not at all sure, however, that the theme of the trilogy is as representatively Australian as is often suggested. It is true that Richardson confessed her interest in 'the misfits who were physically and mentally incapable of adapting themselves to this hard new world'. And it's true that the novel itself seems often to posit a connection between the harshness of the Australian environment and the failure of the sensitive and civilized colonist to adjust to it. But we soon recognize that Richard Mahony is not a typical case of colonial malaise at all. Mahony's malaise is deeper than, and in the last analysis independent of, his discontent as a colonist. And this, too, Richardson wanted to show. Mahony was created from memories of her father, 'a well-meaning and upright man, but so morbidly thin-skinned that he could nowhere and at no time, adapt himself to his surroundings'. Within the trilogy these two rather different emphases seem to exist uneasily together, and they give rise to what is perhaps its most important preoccupation—the question of suffering and the very meaning of human life itself. Whether or not one finds the attempted exploration satisfactory, the book is unique among Australian novels in its serious and constant concern with the question.

One of the main issues raised by the *Fortunes of Richard Mahony*, then, seems to me to be the way in which its several themes are organized, and whether in fact the book does not attempt to say too much, and too ambiguously or tentatively. How does its structure and design compel us to interpret Mahony's experience? How does the book deal with its own radical questioning of the universe?

The Proem to *Australia Felix* (the ironic title of the trilogy's

first volume) gives a quite distinct statement about the ensuing action; the generality and scope of its reflections on the panorama of the goldfields and the near-lyricism of the prose style announce that this is so. 'In a shaft on the Gravel Pits, a man had been buried alive' it begins. A minute later the incident, completely lacking human significance, is forgotten, swallowed up in the harsh anonymity of the diggers' community. This fevered and perilous existence has a compulsive power that holds even the disillusioned to the alien soil, experiencing 'all the hatred of the unwilling exile for the land that gives him house-room'. In the grip of gold-lust, men are ruined, degraded, betray natural affections and responsibilities. And the burden of the Proem is that it is the land itself, once lovely in virginity, now deeply scored by shafts and desecrated by mechanical din, that punishes her ravishers:

> It was like a form of revenge taken on them for their love-less schemes of robbing and fleeing; a revenge contrived by the ancient, barbaric country they had so lightly invaded. Now, she held them captive—without chains; ensorcelled—without witchcraft; and lying stretched like some primeval monster in the sun, her breasts freely bared, she watched, with a malignant eye, the efforts made by these puny mortals to tear their lips away.

Over-written as this is, the point it makes is obvious. We are to witness the fate of the individual in this alien environment. Led there by his restless gambling spirit, he becomes a prisoner of the soil he has come to plunder. Our first glimpses of Richard Mahony, the refined and sensitive doctor—turned-digger-turned-storekeeper, so firmly establish his disharmony with everything around him that we think we see in the Proem a prefiguring of his fate. A mob of discontented diggers ridicule his civility and civilization at a public meeting, but they enthusiastically support the hearty man-to-man tone with which his young friend Purdy woos them. Mahony, aloof and contemptuous, is glad that he has 'struck no roots'.

Nevertheless the roots grow—he marries and takes up medicine again. He becomes prosperous, but his intense dislike of 'the promiscuous connexions and slap-dash familiarity of colonial life' and 'the dust and drought and brazen skies', only increases. He feels caught, stifled. He struggles to keep his brain fertile, his spirit questing. But what we first notice as impatience, reserve and fastidiousness in Mahony's character, now begins to look more and more like an inability to cope with life. He begins to realize that the discontent he feels is inherent not in his situation or environment, but in himself: 'a gnawing desire for change as change; a distinct fear of being pinned too long

to the same spot . . . a conviction that to live on without change meant decay'. The conventional 'colonial malaise' is only a rationalization of something deeper.

Now while this transition is logical enough and psychologically valid, I feel that the stated intent of *Australia Felix* is vitiated by this new emphasis. The question the Proem raises is not really explored at all, because it is so soon discarded in the interests of developing Richard's character not as colonial, but as congenital misfit, to give his story more tragic proportions still. Certainly Richardson does continue to stress that Richard is an unhappy and unsuccessful colonist, and to remind us at significant points in his downfall that it all began with his restless digger spirit. 'Since the fates have pitched us here, here we must stay and work our vein until we've laid the gold bare,' he says to Mary as he finds life in England no more congenial than life in the colonies. The heavy irony, which Mary picks up, is that 'the fates' are in fact Richard's caprices, and will lead him restlessly on whether the search is for gold or the treasure of heaven. His gambles bring him undreamt-of success, then ruin and misery. But always the forces of Mahony's destiny are not the malevolent forces of colonial society and an alien environment, but the forces within his own impetuous and complex self.

Out of this situation grows the novel's concern about the meaning of life—for a man like Richard and for all men. In the first weeks of his practice, while his young wife shoulders the responsibility of unpaid bills, Richard buries himself in theological studies—in quest of 'a panacea for the ills and delusions of life':

> He was trying to pierce the secret of existence—to rede the riddle that has never been solved.—What am I, Whence have I come? Whither am I going? What meaning has the pain I suffer, the evil that men do? Can evil be included in God's scheme?

Richard is restlessly looking for what he calls 'life with a capital L'. The novel is the history of his continual wandering in search of it—first back to England, where he gradually realizes that 'no place could ever be home to him as long as he lived', then, in the days of his prosperity, over to Europe again to taste its civilization, finally, in the last years of his life, ill and impoverished, from practice to failing practice in the search of stability and happiness.

As the inexorable movement of the third book gathers to its climax this question of the meaning of life, and of suffering becomes increasingly imperative. A series of incidents crystallize it for us. When Richard, blinded by physical and mental pain, whips his horse with irrational and uncharacteristic cruelty we

remember with Cuffy and Richard himself, the father's gentle remonstrance to his little son when he has hit his wooden horse in a moment of jealous rage. At the turning point of Richard's fortunes his anguish at the news of his financial ruin becomes one with Cuffy's at seeing some men batter and drown a puppy. Richard speaks words of comfort for them both:

> Such things as this were often to be met with in life; Cuffy must be a brave little man and face them squarely. Somehow they all fitted into a great scheme on God's part, which our poor brains were too puny to understand.

In this spirit the death of John Turnham, in one of the finest scenes in the book, has been met. It is the comfort Richard takes together with spiritualist doctrine, at the death of his little daughter Lallie. But not only do all his declarations of faith sound clichéd and conventional. In many ways the conventional religion they represent is shown to be inadequate, narrow, even wrong. And such statements look rather feeble beside Mary's impassioned questioning of the Almighty after Lallie's death:

> It is cruel of You . . . cruel! You, all-powerful, and called Love! Oh, of what use to create so fair a thing, merely to destroy it.

Left alone in his up-country practice for the scorching summer months, Richard's soul-searching becomes more desperate and violent. He hears again in his mind that conversation with Tangye in the early Ballarat days—Tangye representing Richard's disillusioned 'other self,' arguing that life has no greater object than 'to keep a roof over the heads and food in the mouths of the helpless beings who depend on us', and the idealistic Richard affirming that life is what we, by God's guidance, make of it. Now on the brink of suicide it is this idealism that holds him back, after prolonged and intense inward struggle:

> there ran through him the beatific certainty that his pain, his suffering—and how infinitesimal these were, he now saw for the first time—had their niche in God's Scheme (pain the bond that linked humanity: not in joy, in sorrow alone were we yoke fellows)—that all creation, down to the frailest protoplasmic thread, was one with God. . . .

Richardson spares us no detail of the suffering he is to bear—she shows relentlessly his approaching insanity, degradation and humiliation, the wreckage of his proud self, the slow death by paralysis. And Mary mourns:

> the dear warm incompetent human creature at whose side she had been through so much. Who had so tried, so harassed her, made her suffer so. —Oh, as if that mattered now! What *was* life, but care and suffering?

Neither Richard's beatific vision, which affirms a too-easy, even a glib certainty, nor Mary's pessimistic and limited view seem to me to be at all satisfactory as comments on the weighty and terrible action of the book. As Leonie Gibson points out in

Henry Handel Richardson and some of Her Sources, the 'pulpit platitudes' of Mahony's moment of illumination seem to distance it, not to make it more immediate. In expression and concept, this is a trite answer to one of the eternal mysteries. Certainly the answer is Mahony's, and not necessarily the answer of the novel that contains him. But one has the sense that Richardson is herself emotionally committed to Mahony's view, since it is never really 'placed', its inadequacy is not demonstrated. Mary's view provides no very convincing criticism of Richard's — (I don't feel that it is intended to do so)—because Mary is so obviously lacking in any kind of spiritual awareness that she cannot comment authoritatively.

Of course, as J.G.Robertson points out (*The Art of Henry Handel Richardson*), the structure of the novel seems to be positing some hope in life beyond mere passive suffering. Mary's growing strength and resilience parallels Richard's decline, which is largely presented through the sensitive consciousness of Cuffy. Care is taken to counterpoint the sufferings of Richard and the childish delights of his son—the child's horizon expands as his father's gradually narrows. Yet despite the impressive courage with which Mary shoulders responsibilities, it would be equally true to suggest that she is, in part, responsible for Richard's final collapse. It is 'the ceaseless clash and war of their opposing temperaments' as Richard realizes, that hounds him to madness. Through fear of Mary, Richard keeps to himself the gnawing worry of his debt; petty squabbles about money drive them further apart when he most needs sympathetic guidance and understanding.

If the book is suggesting that the Marys of this world are its hope, its sure foundation, that the meaning of life is what Tangye, in his cynicism, and Mary in her insensitivity, affirm—merely keeping stability and harmony in the narrow, circumscribed world of domestic comforts and material rewards—it is then severely critical of its own affirmation of value. So critical that one wonders whether *The Fortunes of Richard Mahony* makes any coherent statement at all. Mary represents the world that crushes Richard. Unable to cope with it, Richard is also unable to read its riddle. His grim story enacts the hopeless inexplicability of the problem that obsesses him. Any answers the novel may tend to make are only ineffectual gestures in the face of a problem that is 'great' certainly, but which demands intellectual and imaginative resources far greater than Richardson's. It is hard to think of a novelist outside Dostoevsky who has such resources. But conceding that the life of Richard Mahony raises questions that are

too big for Henry Handel Richardson to cope with, it seems all the more inept of her to keep asking them, to make them, in fact, the main theme of the trilogy.

It is not that we *expect* her to give any answer to the questions Richard asks, and that his life compels the reader to ask. Clearly, great tragedy asks us precisely the same questions—why do we suffer? what does it all mean?—and gives us no answer at all. For it is the essence of the tragic experience that the forces that overwhelm man are ultimately irrational, inexplicable. But what great tragedy certainly does give us is a meaningful recognition of the inexplicability, an awareness of the tragic plight of man, of such a man as Richard Mahony, or Willie Loman, or Lear, which is spiritually and artistically mature. What is needed is the kind of clear-eyed appraisal that can at once discern and give artistic order to the chaos that seems to be man's life, without belittling the magnitude of his problems by oversimplification. The mark of Richardson's failure is perhaps that she actually tries to give answers, that she lets stand unchallenged both Richard's glib statements of faith and Mary's complacent ideal of devoted service.

We are reminded in fact, that great art depends on a profound spiritual insight and a firm intellectual grasp of the complexities of experience, complexities which can only sufficiently be met by the deep and sensitive awareness that artistic expression of them demands. In tracing the confused intent of book one of the trilogy, and the final inadequacy with which Richardson deals with what seems to me to be the main theme, I have tried to suggest that her intellectual grasp on the experience portrayed in *The Fortunes of Richard Mahony* is weak and compromised.

There is of course an imaginative as well as an intellectual failure involved here. We see most clearly Richardson's lack of discrimination and of critical self-awareness when we come to examine her prose style. As Leonie Gibson points out, her imagination is noticeably fettered by a conscientious concern for facts. The writing is so often flat, sentimental, laboured, that it in a sense comes between reader and subject matter, vitiating what it tries to stress. At moments of highest intensity we are again and again pulled up by the expected phrase, the cliché. Two passages about England that closely succeed each other in the Proem to the second book illustrate the unevenness of the style, and its typical failures. The first describes the sentiments of an old Devon man remembering his home. It seems to me vivid and evocative, genuinely communicating emotion and sensation:

> Seemed as if all the good smells o' the rest of the world couldn't make up to him for a bit o' peat burnin' on a still winter's evenin'; or new thatch smellin' in the rains; or the softish stink o' the milch-cow's dung in the long wet meadow grass.

Contrast Mahony's first glimpse of England:

> At sight of it Mahony had a shock of surprise—that thrilled surprise that England holds for those of her sons who journey back, no matter whence, across the bleak and windy desert of the seas. Quite so lovely as this, one had not dared to remember the homeland. There it lay, stretched like an emerald belt against its drab background, and was as grateful to sun-tired eyes as a draught of mountain water to a climbers' parched throat. Not a road of this earth looked barren or unkempt: veritable lawns ran down to the brink of the cliffs; hedges ruled bosky lines about the meadows; the villages were bowers of trees—English trees.

We don't share Richard's shock of surprise as we share the Devon man's delight. Both passages give us concrete details, but there is nothing in the second one to challenge or attract our imagination. It is an incantation of clichés about England that have been in currency since John of Gaunt. There is far more evocative lushness in the first passage than the second, for all its stress on coolness and greenness, its well-worn 'emerald belt', can possibly give us. The pretentiousness of the style too, helps to make it ineffectual—the typically awkward inversion of the second sentence, phrases like 'one had not dared to remember', and the final absurd repetition—'English trees'.

Often the tiredness and Victorian sentimentality of the prose style results, I think, from Richardson's attempt to capture the idiom of the characters themselves. J.G.Robertson writes: 'the author has not merely reproduced the historical *milieu*: she has with a rigorous and self-suppressing objectivity transferred herself back into it. She has made herself one with her people and their time; she writes of them with a Victorian mind and a Victorian sentiment.' While Richardson's style cannot be said to vary greatly from novel to novel, and while there is not always convincing evidence that she can produce anything better than the sentimentality she supposedly adopts for the purpose of verisimilitude, there are some passages that show a certain flexibility and control of tone and suggest that she has more real objectivity than Professor Robertson's odd remark allows her.

Part of the difficulty is that the narrative has a disconcerting habit of drifting: taking on, without warning, the characteristic idiom of the character it discusses. In a passage where a particular character is obviously soliloquizing, it is easier to place the idiom. So that when we read, early in the book, about the young Polly, that 'she had made quite a warm little nest in his memory',

and 'what a boon it would have been during the past week, to have a busy, willing little woman at work, with him and for him, behind the scenes', we may charitably remark that the rather cloying patronage is Richard's and not Richardson's. But a passage like the following, which discloses the designs of Gracey Marriner, 'widow', to attract Richard, is more subtle:

> The piano closed, the lady and he dropped into talk. And having skimmed the surface of various subjects on which they found themselves in marvellous accord, they came round to the one which still engrossed Mahony's attention. Of Spiritualism Mrs Marriner was ignorant; she begged the doctor to enlighten her. And the rough sketch he have her interested her so much that she expressed a strong wish to know more. He promised to bring an armful of literature; and then if her interest still held, to procure her the entrée to a sitting at the house of that arch-spiritualist, Mrs Phayre, where remarkable phenomena took place. Weird noises might be heard there at dead of night: furniture was moved by unseen hands from its place against the wall.

Mingled with the unmistakable narrative voice of the author, who traces meaningfully the skilled way in which Mrs Marriner controls the interlude, commenting wryly on the 'marvellous accord' and in that final sentence, on the more ridiculous aspects of spiritualism, there are also the characteristic 'idioms' of Mahony and the lady. Mrs Marriner's voice comes across through the slight exaggerations of 'was ignorant', 'begged the doctor to enlighten her'. Richard's is hinted at in the careful yet polite qualification 'if her interest still held'. This passage illustrates the typical way in which the narrative drifts, chameleon-like, at best with a certain flexibility, at worst with lamentable negligence.

At best the style is flexible enough, the tone sufficiently controlled to give separate and distinctive life to two such different characters as Mary and Tilly—in any dialogue the precise, qualified, modulated phrases of Mary reflect her reticence and refinement, her tendency to disapprove, in contrast to the vigorous colloquialism, the almost defiance, which presents Tilly's robust good nature. For this reason I think that the minor characters—Purdy, Tilly, John Turnham, the Ococks, Zara and the rest have a more independent existence in the narrative than Nettie Palmer suggests. Certainly, we do sometimes see them through Richard's eyes, but more often and tellingly they seem to be allowed to speak for themselves. And in the case of Tilly, for example, the author distinctly shows that Richard's view of Tilly is not the whole truth, and that its limitation is a limitation in Richard himself.

The sensitive exploration of the relationships between the main characters, Richard and Mary, and Richard and Cuffy is,

as I've suggested, continually flawed by Richardson's style. Cuffy's childish reflections on his father's situation are sometimes quite firmly and delicately handled, at other times, vitiated by excessive sentimentality. Book three is nevertheless clearly the best part of the trilogy, in its concentration and psychological acuteness. The wealth of background material that diffused the action in the earlier books here gives way to a stark economy that really focuses the temperamental clash between Richard and his wife. Their virtues and defects, the nature of the love that unites them, are presented with a shrewdness and sympathetic understanding that makes Richardson's ultimate failure of insight all the more disappointing.

In the last analysis, *The Fortunes of Richard Mahony* seems to me to be a large and ambitious book, but not a great one. Its earnest study of human psychology is constantly betrayed by the inherent limitations of Richardson's prose style; its attempt to explore one of the fundamental problems of human existence only emphasizes her spiritual and artistic immaturity, her failure to bring the varying statements in her book into some kind of plausible synthesis. For all its scope and seriousness of intention, it is, I think, a minor achievement in our literary history.

Jennifer Dallimore

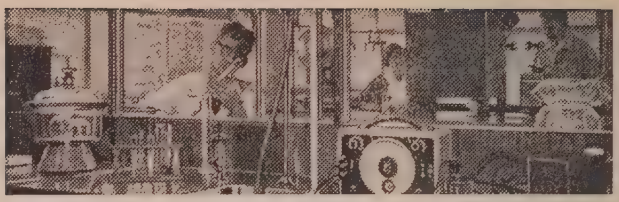
ADVICE

Vivian Smith

This is one season of the heart's dismay
when life is like a strident conversation;
words pretend there's something left to say
when silence simply covers consternation.

Discordant season: moments of despair:
we glimpse the cracks that run all through our lives;
the heart we lightly thought rich and austere;
the mind's disordered drawer of borrowed knives.

Don't run with words. Don't seek them. Words aren't wise.
The mind's eclipses move to prove its suns.
And nudity of all is best disguise:
stay bare in stillness. . . . Vanity runs.



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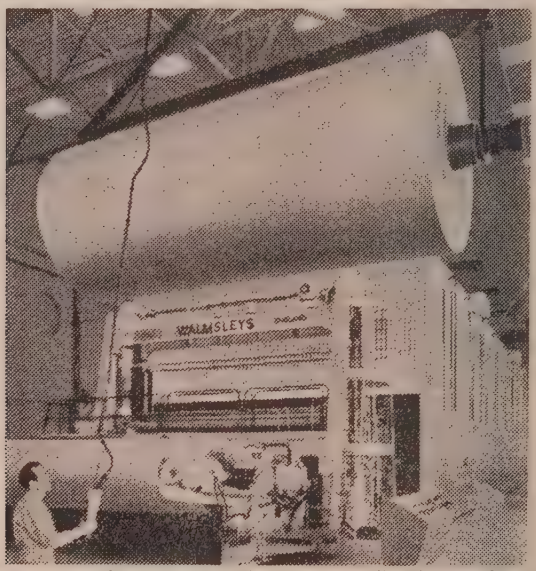

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THE PYRAMID IN THE WASTE

AN INTRODUCTION TO A.D.HOPE'S POETRY

James McAuley

I

LITERATURE often reveals a surprising unity in extreme diversity. The great themes are in one sense limited and recurrent, though in another sense ever-new and changing. Rebecca West says strikingly: 'A major work of art . . . must have a bearing on the question which concerns us most deeply of all: whether the universe is good or bad.' She also says, in the same stimulating book, *The Court and the Castle*: 'it is a tendency of creative literature, when it rises above a certain level, to involve itself with statecraft and religion: to exist and belong to Him.' Broadly enough understood this is true; and it is one reason why literature fares poorly amongst that mass of contemporaries who feel it is the part of wisdom to know and care nothing about either form of the government of man, terrestrial or celestial.

The tendency of literature to remain true to a few themes, which are inexhaustible in their possibilities, can be illustrated by the work of three Australian poets, superficially quite unlike one another: Christopher Brennan, Harold Stewart, and A.D. Hope. Yet the prevailing theme in each is one and the same: the search for a principle of personal (and by wider operation social) integration, hence creativity and joy. Such a principle must be transfiguring and salvific. The search involves a journey into the underworld to grapple with nightmares and despairs and win the gift of grace. It is also envisaged in its erotic aspect: the divinized or paradisal state longed for is identified with nuptial union, which, however, breaks down into disillusion and severance and the vain hope of somehow attaining the longed-for divinization in an authentic form. Brennan wrote of practically nothing else. Stewart traced it out in his *Orpheus* sequence. Hope, in a relatively early attempt, 'Pygmalion' (in *The Wandering Islands*) gives a resumé in one poem of the experience which Brennan could not have imagined presenting in such raw painfulness and shocking terseness.

This poem is not reprinted in Hope's recent collection which was published in England (*Poems*, Hamish Hamilton) and one can hazard a guess why. It was one of the first of a number of poems in which poetry is used as an instrument of self-knowledge. The most deep-seated and violent tensions and conflicts, the most painful ulcerations of the spirit are probed and exposed. Either in direct confession, or by dramatic images thrown onto a screen in the endeavour to exteriorize the theme, the inner anguish and dread, shame, horror, longing and despair are *avowed*.

Clearly such private and often obscure subjective material, charged with violent emotions rendered explosive by inhibition, threatens the maintenance of artistic control. 'Pygmalion' does not, like the later poems, have stylistic unity. It falls into three different pieces tacked together, each but precariously in control of its mode of expression.

As one would expect, the earlier poems are the most uncertain in their style and tone. They are also in many cases (e.g. 'Observation Car') full of a sense of frustration, stopped growth, defeat of psychic energies . . . even a kind of fear of the death of the personality. It is from this state of apparent defeat that the poet begins the search and struggle recorded, directly or indirectly, in the later poems.

One can make a rough sort of classification. Sometimes the poet deals with his material by turning it into satire or invective, or farce or serious-grotesque entertainment. Sometimes he objectifies the experience by casting it into myth or legend or other figurations. Sometimes the presumably 'autobiographical' content is either left on the surface, or stands behind a thinning veil, as in such poems, in the second volume, as the admirable 'An Epistle' (Edward Sackville to Venetia Digby), the stark 'Meditation on a Bone', or the ballad-like 'The Walker'.

The expressiveness of the physical body of Hope's verse is worth noticing, especially its tactile and kinaesthetic values, which seem to me to be unusually prominent. For the most part the verse is musical speech, recitative, or rhetoric. The pure singing note emerges only a few times, as in the lyrical 'Chorale'.

Hope has, to an almost dangerous degree, a facility in adopting the different modes of expression that have prevailed in poetry from the sixteenth to the twentieth century. The danger is that this facility of literary mimicry will become mere virtuosity. But it does seem to me that, although this element has increased, if anything, in Hope's work, it has also become more organically essential to what he is doing: it has become a resource of

expressiveness giving a further resonance to the meaning. I would observe also that this exploitation of various styles within the tradition is wide-ranging and renders misleading any characterization of the poet as a 'classicist' or 'Augustan'. If one had to choose a word, I should think 'romantic' in some of its important meanings a truer label.

II

The poems have their starting point from a high degree of dissociation and conflict within the personality: reason versus passion, morality versus desire, sociality versus individual feeling. There is the constant endeavour to integrate the personality, to achieve wholeness and consequent joy and spontaneity—to consummate, in Blake's terms, a Marriage of Heaven and Hell:

> *Now the heart sings with all its thousand voices*
> *To hear this city of cells, my body, sing.*
> *The tree through the stiff clay at long last forces*
> *Its thin strong roots and taps the secret spring.*
> ('The Gateway')

> *So love which Nature's craft at first designed*
> *For comfort and increase of kind,*
> *Puts on another nature, grows to be*
> *The language of the mystery;*
> *The heart resolves its chaos then, the soul*
> *Lucidly contemplates the whole*
> *Just order of the random world; and through*
> *That dance she moves, and dances too.'*
> ('An Epistle')

In order to penetrate these poems and understand that they are not mere literary exercises in the sardonic or the erotic, one must discern the basic structure of assumptions and values which informs the work. Like all serious poetry it has an intrinsic metaphysic, without an understanding of which the true *morphe* of the poems cannot be grasped.

In Western civilization there has been a long struggle, carried on partly within Christianity and partly without, between two rival conceptions of the nature of man and his spiritual destiny. One is the orthodox Christian view, and the other, under various disguises, is the Manichean heresy.

In the orthodox view matter and spirit, body and soul, are both good, since created by God; and though body and soul are in

a fallen state both are redeemable and are predestined to a final transfiguration. Man is by nature a body-soul entity: not a spirit camping in the flesh, or imprisoned in it, but a unity of flesh and spirit, however fallen into disharmony. The materiality of our human existence is not in itself a degradation. This applies not only to the goodness of sexuality and sensual enjoyment but also to all those social institutions with their material thickness and weight in which the person becomes embedded: marriage, organized religion, political and economic affairs. The fallen state of the world and the flesh is an evil, but the world and the flesh are not evil in principle but part of created good. The sacramental character of Christianity is the expression of this orthodox 'materialism'.

The Manichean view is opposite. This is explicit in the Catharist heresy of mediaeval times. Matter is the principle and source of evil and is irredeemable. It stands opposite to spirit in an irreconcilable dualism. Man in his actual worldly being is in a state of degradation, a pure spirit imprisoned in the defiling flesh. Redemption consists in liberation from materiality. This involves the condemnation of sexuality and sense-life as such; and also of social institutions with their material structures that oppress the spirit. In mediaeval Catharism the path of perfection consisted of the rejection of marriage and generation as evil; suicide is the highest act of final liberation. Much of this Manichean tendency percolated into later Christianity, in Protestant Puritanism and Catholic Jansenism, as a masked heterodoxy claiming to be the true way in all its rigour. The doctrines of the total corruption of man, the fear of sexuality and pleasure as intrinsically guilty and degrading, the rejection of the sacramental view of the material order and of marriage in particular, the tendency to exalt a spiritual purity (angelism) which treats all institutional arrangements and practical compromises as the denial of the spirit—these are the Manichean traits.

As I read it, the ground-structure of assumptions and valuations in Hope's poetry is the Manichean inheritance, presumably mediated by Calvinism. This is the starting-point, but what actually develops thereafter is quite complicated: it is an attempt to establish a new structure of assumptions and valuations different from either Manicheism or Christian orthodoxy. Let us, however, first observe passages where the Manichean ground-plan shows through unmistakably.

In 'Ascent into Hell' the poet goes back through childhood—through fear, nightmare, guilt and punishment—until he passes beyond memory to the moment of birth. Birth into this world

is equated with damnation, the mouth of the womb is identified with the gate of hell in Dante's *Inferno*:

> *And through the uncertain gloom, sudden I see*
> *beyond remembered time the imagined entry,*
> *the enormous Birth-gate whispering,* 'per me
> per me si va tra la perduta gente.'

The institutional aspects of courtship and marriage are throughout fiercely satirized, not merely as suburban vulgarities, but as a betrayal and death of the spirit. This is the meaning of the brilliantly funny 'The Brides', in which the suburban brides are likened to motor-cars passing from the assembly line through the salesman's hands to the customer. It is no less the message of 'The Explorers', and of 'The Lingam and the Yoni' where authentic joy dies of the materiality of suburban circumstances.

In 'Easter Hymn' the same critique is directed against institutional religion. It is Christ in his Church that is addressed:

> *The City of God is built like other cities:*
> *Judas negotiates the loans you float;*
> *You will meet Caiaphas upon committees;*
> *You will be glad of Pilate's casting vote.*

Those true to the spirit are, not the Wise Virgins who institutionally conform and are therefore corrupted, but the Foolish Virgins who remain outside:

> *Your truest lovers still the foolish virgins,*
> *Your heart will sicken at the marriage feasts*
> *Knowing they watch you from the darkened gardens*
> *Being polite to your official guests.*

Taken singly, such passages might not establish the presence of a deep-seated, almost automatic and unconscious, mode of interpreting reality such as I am positing. Nevertheless, if one reviews the whole body of work, I submit that no other view makes sense of what German critics might call the *Problematik* of Hope's poetry.

Let me draw attention, for instance, to Hope's verbal rendering of a Mannerist painting, *Circe* by Dosso Dossi. What is presented here is the transformation of the lovers into beasts, the loss of the human and the victory of brute matter.

In 'The Death of the Bird' death comes as a release of the spirit from the wheel of instinctual life with its perpetual recurrence. The sentiment in this poem is ambiguous, as if the life-wish and the death-wish were both speaking. But is not the bird an image of the pilgrim-soul, bound to the fulfilment of its daily round, hedged in by the constraint of 'custom and fear', but shrinking from that final release into the vast?

The Catharist solution of release by suicide is confronted in the poem 'The Sleeper' in the first volume; but here one is already in the region of complexity, and I shall refer to it again.

The critical instance for my interpretation is the much-admired poem 'Imperial Adam', in which the Adam and Eve legend is re-written to give a different account of the Fall. Matter, the flesh, sensual enjoyment and sexuality, are presented in all their glowing delight. Yet they are also presented as the direct and immediate source of the appearance of evil and guilt. The wills of the two are entirely naive and innocent. But the fruit of their fleshly delight is guilt and death: not as the result of disobedience, or misuse of natural appetite, but simply by instinctive and normal use. The birth of the murderer Cain at the end of this glowing rhapsody is not just a gratuitous shock effect: it is the consummation of the poem.

Now, in advancing this poem as evidence, I am in the delicate and temarious position of contradicting the poet's own reading. The problem is not that the poem celebrates the natural splendour of the material creation. That I can allow for, as we shall see. The difficulty is that, in a letter in reply to my advancing this interpretation (in an admittedly incomplete form), the poet amicably began, 'Probably you are right about "Imperial Adam" ', but went on to say: 'But I did not mean it that way. I meant to put a case for the spontaneous generation of evil from things not in themselves evil at all—rather like the occurrence of lethal mutations in biology.' If I nevertheless do not give up my point, it is because I am concerned with the pressure—almost automatic and unconscious—of a mode of interpreting reality which can persist underneath many surface manoeuvres. The assumption that such a pattern exists is necessary if one is to make sense of Hope's poetry. How explain the vehemence of its reactions, unless one knows what it is reacting *against*; how explain its metaphysical torment, which is something more than the record of personal grief and ill-starred love? Finally, in regard to 'Imperial Adam' in particular, what is the point of the following description of Eve?—

> *This plump gourd severed from his virile root,*
> *She promised on the turf of Paradise*
> *Delicious pulp of the forbidden fruit;*
> *Sly as the snake she loosed her sinuous thighs . . .*

By the identification with the forbidden fruit and the serpent Eve's body becomes the source of evil. Notice too that at this point the shadow of something not naïve and innocent touches the scene in the 'slyness' of the amorous invitation.

III

What we must now place in its significance is the celebration of sensuality which (in alternation with images of disgust) is a feature of Hope's poetry:

The pau-paw drooped its golden breasts above
Less generous than the honey of her flesh;
The innocent sunlight showed the place of love;
The dew on its dark hairs winked crisp and fresh.

Now, in the first place, it is to be observed that the adult Hope is an unbeliever, an atheist Manichee. The whole conception of the 'spiritual' is imperilled, and the spirit has certainly no heaven to go to after liberation. (This is part of the point of the suicide-meditation, 'The Sleeper'.) Half at least of the Manichean scheme has collapsed. There is earth, and a hell, which is really the psychic underworld of nightmare and dread and slavery to instinct, a dimension of this life. Where, in such a universe, is to be found the principle of grace, of transcendance, of reconciliation and reintegration? This is the point at which the poems come face to face with nihilism and despair. In a Manicheism turned atheist there would seem to be no solution.

But in the second place, the collapse of the original Manichean scheme, with its supernal plane of celestial liberation or pure spirituality, also invalidates the condemnation of the flesh as evil. The poet is in conscious revolt against the condemnation of the flesh: he affirms the beauty of the material world, the legitimacy and innocence of the senses. The tension of 'Imperial Adam' is precisely that the poem brings its celebration of the natural order into abrupt collision with the lurking Manichean heritage.

This celebration is the poet's clue to a new path of integration and transcendence—one that can be stated in purely naturalistic, this-wordly terms. Where is the salvific principle to be found? The lines along which a solution is attempted are as follows:—Look again at the instinctual life, the fleshly libido, the passionate eros, round which so many images of guilt, nightmare and disgust accumulate. Is it not, nevertheless, the principle of life? See what paradises of beauty, promises of joy, spring up on its way! Even if they lie under an obscure condemnation these ecstatic moments exist! Within passion there is a daemonic power capable of transcending our everyday selves and transfiguring us. This power is, as it were, an 'infernal' or 'daemonic' grace, which has its own myths and rituals, and confers salvation on those strong enough to give it sway. A precarious 'heaven' can be built by the titanic powers of the underworld. But make

no mistake: this transcendence takes us beyond good and evil. The categories of guilt and innocence are transcended by those strong enough. Such persons form an elite, and are a law to themselves, not answerable to 'the frantic devotees of good and ill'. Their union is a divinizing union:

there with the mark
Of blood upon his breast and on his brow,
An unknown king, with my transfigured face,
Bends your immortal body to his delight.

The poems of Hope's 'middle period' are revealing for this stage of the quest. 'The Muse' is Hope's 'infernal' or 'daemonic' riposte to my 'celestial' account of poetic creation. In 'Pyramis', the achievements of human power and art are due to the infernal energies, to an extremity of passion and pride, not excluding political despotism and cruelty, bordering on madness and criminality. 'Invocation' is the proclamation of the need to ascend beyond good and evil. Everything truly great is ascribed to sheer will and energy, assertion and defiance:

The man alone digging his bones a hole;
The pyramid in the waste—whose images?
Blake's tower of vision defying the black air;
Milton twice blind groping about his soul
For exit, and Swift raving mad in his—
The builders of the pyramid everywhere.

You can recognize the general name for this type of spiritual adventure: it is Nietzscheanism. Nietzsche faced the threat of nihilism and proclaimed the superman. Dionysian excess, enthusiasm, amorality, are affirmed against Apollonian balance and measure.

In many of these poems I am reminded of Wilhelm Schmidt's comment in his *Primitive Revelation* on the effects of the Fall: 'Perhaps the partaking of the fruit produced at first a certain intoxication, momentarily unleashing wonderful powers and conjuring up glittering phantoms of delight, even as it burst the shackles that had restrained the passions.' Schmidt himself compares this to the Nietzschean attitude, 'the complete enjoyment of life', which places man's supreme happiness in a sort of Dionysian intoxication. One may say that the enterprise is doomed to failure: that the daemonic powers will not build Jerusalem, that the higher criminality is still criminality, and heroic mania is still mania. From a literary point of view, I would also observe that a tremendous strain is put upon the language of poetry, which has to do the work of providing rhetorical transfigurations and resolutions which are not properly

grounded in reality. It is the same difficulty that one finds in Rilke, whose influence is discernible in some of Hope's poems of this period.

IV

It was not likely that this overstrained Nietzschean posture—however brilliant and moving its literary products—would satisfy Hope, and it seems to me that the direction of Hope's further development has been away from this extreme and untenable romanticism. It is significant, I suppose, that Hope's criticism has increasingly set a course close to 'orthodoxy', against romantic and post-romantic irrationalism—very eloquently indeed in his essay 'The Discursive Mode' (*Quadrant* Vol. 1, No. 1). There he affirms the sense of a 'natural order' and rejects the tendency to equate poetry with excitement, and neglect the discursive forms of literature in favour of incoherent spasma of intoxicated irrationality. One may say generally that wherever the notion of a 'natural order' is reasserted, not as a demand imposed on reality but as a recognition of the possible perfections actually present in reality, one is on the way to reconciling the Dionysian-Apollonian dualism and achieving *centrality*, which need not be *mediocrity*.

In the poetry, I would instance, in the first place, the unpublished satirical work *Dunciad Minimus* as a celebration, which rises to impressive beauty, of 'orthodoxy' in the realm of culture: an affirmation of an intellectual order to which the poet has obligations, and of the need to defend this against the barbarians.

Among other later poems I would instance one which, while it does not seem to me to be without unresolved problems, is of great interest, 'An Epistle from Holofernes'. The poem deals in part with the difficulty that the daemonic transfigurations proclaimed in the 'middle-period' poems are 'beyond good and evil'. We have seen enough cut-rate Nietzscheanism in the form of beatniks and fascists to make the dish unattractive once it is recognized. The cult has lost its aristocratic air and has been vulgarized. Hope shifts the problem along to the need for some kind of balance between the night-powers and the daytime world. We must live two modes of existence, symbolized here by daylight vision and starlight vision:

There's a hard thing, and yet it must be done,
Which is: to see and live them both as one.
The daylight vision is stronger to compel,
But leaves us in the ignorance of hell;
And they, who live by starlight all the time,
Helpless and dangerous, blunder into crime;

And we must learn and live, as yet we may,
Vision that keeps the night and saves the day.

Once more, it is the Marriage of Heaven and Hell that is somehow required—but not really achieved, save by rhetorical trompe l'oeil. Intellectual vision, wisdom, creativity and love are *not* merely the resultants of extremity of passion, of the surge of organic energies, of heroic guilt or mania.

It is easy enough to say that the drama of Hope's poetry revolves, if I have read it aright, around a false problem. The truth is that man has a certain nature, a certain structure of being, a natural hierarchy of powers, and a natural orientation towards the Good. The way out of the Manichean trap is not by a glorification of body against spirit, passion against reason—that is a mere reversing of the signs—but by holding fast to the body-soul unity of man, to the created goodness of the person thus constituted, and by distinguishing between two possible end-states that this body-soul unity can attain: the kingdom of God, in which all energies are integrated and glorified, and the kingdom of Satan, in which all energies are set in conflict and degraded.

But the fact that the problem is at bottom a false problem does not empty of value the literary record of Hope's wrestling with the problem, nor does it affect the moving quality of many of the poems as records of personal experience. The order of doctrine is one thing; the complexity of human life is another. The dignity and eloquence of two of the most recent poems, the 'Soledades' and 'An Epistle', and the humane realism of 'A Bidding Grace', make one look forward to what may be yet to come. Also, 'A Commination' (though I think it partly fails by adopting too fully the traditionally coarse ranting style of invective) and the relentless satire 'The Kings', which take up again the defence of civilization against barbarism and parasitism, point beyond the tormented and ambiguous splendours which first brought Hope into prominence.

James McAuley

TWO POLITICAL POEMS

Vincent Buckley

SECRET POLICEMAN

Pledge me: I had the hangman for a father
And for my mother the immortal State;
My playground was the yard beside the limepit,
My playsongs the aftercries of hate.

Admire me: I fill these shining boots,
I am soul expanded to a uniform;
A hired world glitters at my senses,
The smell of blood keeps my bloodstream warm.

Pity me: From a world ruddy with flame
I am tugged in dreams to the first cave again,
And in that humid soil and atmosphere
Lie down each night beside the murdered men.

The dead eyes point the way I go,
The dead hands presage me in air.
I run on shifting pavements, by fired walls
Falling, and weighted lamp-posts everywhere.

NO NEW THING

No new thing under the sun:
The virtuous who prefer the dark;
Fools knighted; the brave undone;
The athletes at their killing work;
The tender-hearts who step in blood;
The sensitive paralysed in a mood;
The clerks who rubber-stamp our deaths,
Executors of death's estate;
Poets who count their dying breaths;
Lovers who pledge undying hate;
The self-made and self-ruined men;
The envious with the strength of ten.

They crowd in nightmares to my side,
Enlisting even private pain
In some world-plan of suicide:
Man, gutted and obedient man,
Who turns his coat when he is told,
Faithless to our shining world.
And hard-faced men, who beat the drum
To call me to this Cause or that,
Those heirs of someone else's tomb,
Can't see the sweeter work I'm at,
The building of the honeycomb.

MEMENTO HOMO QUIA PULVIS ES

(Genesis 3, 19)

Gwen Harwood

Policeman postman watchman fireman
airman madman bird man rubbish man
mothers and their gingerbread men
children snowmen
gone are gone.
Dust without dimension swallows
rain and wind and rioting sun.
The seas' dense mantle arches, hollows,
sinks, forms again on monstrous tides.
The last of life: a sack of scars
trapped in death's whirlpool, shudders, claws
light's grey suffusion, till dust hides
its freakish agony. Galaxies
on fire with irony collide,
praising with light their primal cause.

LETTER FROM NEW YORK

THE NEW INTELLECTUAL CLIMATE

Thomas Molnar

POLITICS and intellectual problems are generally separated in the public life of America. At least, this has been traditionally the case, with the brief exception of Roosevelt's first years. But 'JFK', as the press now refers to President Kennedy (evoking the magic initials, 'FDR') is inevitably considered as an 'intellectual in the White House', as an ambassador of Harvard University to Capitol Hill.

Earlier in the century, the French critic, Albert Thibaudet, referred rather contemptuously to the Third Republic as *la République des Professeurs*, a caste progressive in ideology, secularist on religious issues, and positivistic in its scientific world-view. It is no longer an exaggeration to say that in the United States we are approaching a similar situation as our political class becomes increasingly homogeneous intellectually. Of course, the local political boss and the ward leader at the grass roots are still important figures in getting out the vote at election time; but those who formulate policies and particularly those who provide the ideological guidelines belong to a milieu whose mental framework may best be studied in the political articles of small circulation magazines, in textbooks on law and economics, in professorial gatherings, and in the editorials of the *New York Times*.

Thus there is nothing surprising about the enthusiasm which welcomed and still surrounds Kennedy in intellectual circles, and about the hopes attached to the 'first hundred days' of his administration. Although such issues as civil rights for the Negroes, school integration in the South, extended social security, etc., have also taken their places in the Democrats' arsenal, it has been clear from the beginning that the new Brain Trust and its supporters are far more interested in international affairs. In fact, the most important sign that new winds are blowing has been the attempts to reorientate American foreign policy by reaching what is called a more dispassionate view of Soviet objectives.

Those who advocate this, feel that Eisenhower's eight years in office have clouded the real issues and left the country's political mood stagnate at a point reached during the heyday of McCarthy. It seems now that throughout this period of 'inner

exile', our publicists and professors elaborated a new interpretation of cold war and co-existence; they expect the Kennedy era to act upon it and to use them—the authors of the new theories—as apostles and missionaries of the new faith.

Several simultaneous attacks on the political concepts held since 1945 were launched about the time of the new president's inauguration: in *Commentary*, the influential magazine of Jewish intellectuals, Mr Staughton Lynd and Professor W.A.Williams undertook to reappraise the data of the cold war, and concluded by putting the blame on American ill-will. Let us remember that such acquittal of Soviet intentions and actions was successfully carried out once before, in the 'twenties and 'thirties, when Stalin's despotism was explained by the Bolshevik leaders' bad experience with the West from 1917 to 1921, at the time of the Allied expeditions into Russian territory. Now—as then—the history of Soviet-Western relations is written as if the cold war were merely an annoying chapter in a series of conflicts of interests, and as if Communism itself were a negligible quantity in the clash of two imperialisms. (This is the thesis of Professor John Lukacs's *The History of the Cold War*.)

This revision of history is followed by the charting of a new course. Messrs W.W.Rostow (in a series of articles in *The Economist*), Pfaff and Stillman (in a recent book, *New Start in Foreign Policy*) predict for the nineteen-sixties an increasingly multi-polar world, in which ideology and policy will not be dictated from Moscow and Washington as exclusive and hostile power-centres, but also from China, the Asian and African blocs, South America, etc. Thus we are supposed to witness soon a more even distribution of power over the surface of the globe, and even a gradual disappearance of the concept of political-military hegemony. Under such circumstances the authors recommend a 'new vision', which really means the old approach all over again: increased aid to, and sincere campaigns of friendship towards these emerging power blocs.

If I mention these attempts at talking the cold war and Communist threat out of existence, it is because these articles and books reflect the thinking of the political class, the bureaucrats in Washington, the intellectuals in New York's editorial offices, and the professors at our prominent universities. Without their being twenty-four hours a day in print and on the airwaves, the New Frontier could not have been launched as a slogan appealing to all and sundry: the business community which hopes for trade with China, Russia and the untapped territories of underdeveloped areas; the students in the Peace

Corps; the various lobbies in Washington; the all-out supporters of the United Nations; and the myriad idealists, organized and private.

But let us not underestimate the *ideology* underneath these interests. Even though ideologies are abstract constructions mainly divorced from the reality they mean to interpret, they need actual events to feed them and to serve as points of crystallization. Two such events took place during the first three months of the Kennedy administration: the murder of Patrice Lumumba and the attempted invasion of Cuba.

The guilt feeling of Americans toward the Negro population and toward the coloured races generally has become stressed by the rapid emergence of the new nations of Asia and Africa. It is a fascinating phenomenon how the American Negro grows in pride and defiance as African statesmen appear at the United Nations' assemblies and around Washington conference tables. But the brief and dramatic career of Lumumba (received at the White House, having slept at Blair House, galvanizing African nationalism and slain in the jungle) reminded both Negro and White that the old issue between them is far from settled: young Negroes in New York sport a Lumumba-type goatee and shape their racial consciousness after their martyr's ideal: the Whites, on the other hand, seem to assume the guilt for the murder, and atone for it by vociferously joining in the new black racialism and claiming, as Mr Williams did, 'Africa for the Africans'.

While the death of Lumumba shook the psychological roots of the American white intellectual's ambivalent feelings toward his Negro compatriot, the invasion of Cuba staggered his faith in the morality of US policies and in the idealism of John Kennedy. For a painful moment professors and students on our campuses and editorial writers on our newspapers were not sure where they belonged: in the president's camp which revealed itself as interventionist and imperialistic like the British and French at Suez, or among the president's critics who condemned this gross violation of moral principles and reminded us that, after all, Castro spoke of 'socialism' only, not of 'Communism'. For a fleeting instant, I say, the soul (psyche?) of Greenwich Village appeared to be split, but although there was an instinctive move of self-identification with the president, most young people spoke of joining the Castro forces.

I mentioned these two events to illustrate the present and growing ideological trend of re-evaluating our approach to the outside world. What Rostow and other authors predict is, after

all, what their fellow-intellectuals and even the 'average man' would like to believe, namely, that the world will soon turn into *a pluralistic society* on the American pattern, since it is threatened by the 'nuclear holocaust' and the 'population explosion', and because under the aegis of 'peaceful co-existence' all peoples of the globe will be able to benefit by a universally extended generous economic aid.

Advocates of this view are certainly found outside the United States also. But a specifically American experience adds an important factor to it: the *managerial mentality* pervades the thinking of our non-professional politicians and diplomats who are crowding out the professional ones in policy planning and international negotiations, and who are graduates of Harvard School of Business Administration or, for that matter, of Madison Avenue. For these men ideology and psychology are practically the same thing, with the result that they do not believe for a moment that Khrushchev's vehement affirmation of the truth of Communism is anything but campaign oratory, designed to fool (or, let us say, indoctrinate) the masses inside and outside Russia. Recently Mr David Granick, Professor of Economics at the University of Wisconsin, suggested in his book, *The Red Executive* (subtitle: 'A Study of the Organization Man in Russian Industry') that the Soviet industrial manager's background, education, on-the-job experience, and problems vis-à-vis his superiors (the Party officials) are almost identical with those of his American counterpart. The inevitable conclusion is that if the industrial-organizational élites of the two countries are so alike, there is no reason why the two societies, although at somewhat different stages of the political-economic evolutionary curve, should not find many points in common. And, indeed, the recently set up Soviet-American Committee, proposed by Norman Cousins, editor of *Saturday Review*, has initiated regular meetings between American and Soviet intellectuals to discuss and iron out the still existent obstacles to mutual understanding. (One will note that the first step in this direction had been made by Mr Cyrus Eaton, the industrialist magnate friend of Khrushchev at Pugwash a few years ago.)

What can one predict, on the basis of this unmistakable trend concerning the second, third, etc. 'hundred days' of the Kennedy administration? Two facts need be emphasized: the president is very popular, and in nearly every sector of the nation for a different reason: he appeals to Catholics because he is a Catholic; to women because he is handsome; to students because he is the 'college boy' type; to the young intellectuals and executives

because in Kennedy they see their own image: hard-driving, young, dynamic, skilful as an orator and a manipulator of modern political-technical devices, experienced in 'selling' himself to the public.

The second fact is that the advisers surrounding the president are likely to remain at their posts, possibly with minor changes. As I have said, they come from the same milieu, are eager to serve, and represent that segment of the enlightened and cultured American which has recently discovered the outside world of politics and finds there a challenge proportionate to its energies and will to power. It is important to make this point because it is assumed in wide circles distrusting these men that Kennedy has selected them as a result of various political deals, and will 'get rid of them' like some Superman of his earthly impediments. When this will have happened, it is further assumed, the president will initiate *his own* policy, stronger and more resistant to Communism.

Those who argue in this manner not only underestimate the gradual penetration of the *progressive ideological amalgam* into American political thinking and the will to power of the new élite of experts and managers, but also overestimate the ability of the American Right to block this evolution.

Much has been said lately of this 'Right' and its various, although generally unconnected, manifestations. The sudden revelations about the John Birch Society, the popularity of Senator Goldwater, the strength of YAF (Young Americans for Freedom) on the college campuses, last not least, the growing place *National Review* occupies among the small, politically oriented magazines—all would indicate that there is a 'conservative mood developing in the country which may become the most significant event of the nineteen-sixties', as Mr Goldwater remarked at a recent rally of his admirers.

The first thing to note about the New Right is that simultaneously with its appearance on the national stage, American political vocabulary has become more articulate and more in search of principles. Up to the Roosevelt era politics and intellectual life were kept in separate departments; the age of Roosevelt and Truman was largely profitable for the Left which thus had the opportunity of learning the elements of domestic policy and international relations; the Right emerged as a reaction to its opponent's advantages, but had the initial misfortune of at once becoming more than normally controversial with Senator McCarthy.

With the division into Left and Right accepted today, one

would expect a sort of permanent debate developing between the two ideologies. The already discussed intellectualization of our political life could, one might have hoped, benefit by a real controversy instead of the usual effort to reach a consensus, whether in panel discussions, symposia, seminars, etc. The Right could have introduced into the national debate an element of novelty and fresh individualism, since the Left, having formed the liberal establishment for more than two decades, has become inevitably orthodox, timid in its approach, and self-congratulatory.

This, however, did not take place, nor is it likely to take place. The failure is not due to a precisely formulated Leftist opposition: at the anniversary celebration of a respected liberal magazine, the editor spoke of the defence of 'democratic liberalism, *whatever that may be*' (sic!). Few would have been capable of doing better and giving a more workable definition; yet, the inclination of the country's intelligentsia continues to be leftward, with the conservatives playing several unrewarding roles; strawmen to be denounced, 'prophets of doom' to be scorned, or angry young men to be entertained by during long television discussions which reach far into the night.

There are, of course, many reasons behind the quasi-isolation of the Right from the national affairs. One is that in the popular mind the Right is still the Republican Party, although under Eisenhower and Nixon, and presumably under Rockefeller in the future, the GOP has been but a mild imitation of the Democratic Party. Yet, any political or ideological formation to the Right of the Republicans immediately appears to be 'the lunatic fringe'. The second reason is suggested by an article of Wilmoore Kendall of Yale who speaks of the twofold meaning of the average vote as cast by the voter: on the local level, Kendall writes, the citizen's leanings are conservative as reflected in the conservative strength of Congress. But the presidential election is an altogether different business, both parties putting up glamorized candidates who conform to the image the metropolitan mass media of communication like to present to a more intellectual public. And this image is that of a progressive liberal, one who speaks the language of the managerial elite and picks his advisers among them.

What would then happen if the Right found a politician sufficiently appealing to the average voter, and having other assets too, such as a certain intellectual distinction plus grass roots origin? I mean, of course, Senator Goldwater who has become the big question mark of American political life for the

next few years. The conservatives have been disastrously disappointed in their search for an illustrious representative, an anti-Roosevelt, first by losing Robert A. Taft, then by their choice of Eisenhower, and lately of Nixon. Goldwater is literally their last hope.

There is no question that the senator from Arizona is a very skilful politician, a born strategist both inside and outside the Party. Yet, his ultimate success or failure—in securing the nomination, then the presidency or vice-presidency—in 1964 depends much less on personal qualities than on the voters' mood and on the Party officials.

As the success of recruiting of the John Birch Society and of the YAF shows, there is in the United States today a segment of the population alarmed at the spread of socialism, moral inertia, and—in foreign relations—softness towards Communism. But with few individual exceptions, this alarm is not based on dispassionate analysis, and it finds self-defeating ways of expression. A good example is the officially announced goal of the Birchers to impeach Chief Justice Earl Warren, a goal which is unappealing even to many of the Society's members. Put in another, somewhat simplified way, the Right is unable to infiltrate the Left-controlled establishment and use the latter's methods; and it is equally unable to develop an ideology, a political approach and terminology, of its own, although Senator Goldwater, realizing this deficiency, has tried just that in his recent brochure about *The Forgotten American*.

Thus, as long as an ideological 'superstructure' is lacking, and no serious economic troubles hit people who are in some other respects dissatisfied, there is no likelihood either that the Republican Party might be stormed and taken by the Goldwater forces, or that a third party be successfully formed and launched on a political course.

If it is true, as I have said earlier, that American political life is increasingly impregnated by ideology, the Democrats, especially their progressive wing, will have the advantage of using the more appealing slogans, of promising a 'solution' to the cold war, of developing spectacular programmes for the relief of domestic difficulties. An important, and apparently irresistible, trend of modern political development works in their favour.

As the earlier-quoted Kendall article shows, almost the only institutional force reflecting local—thus *also* conservative—interests is Congress. Congressmen still listen to the voter, read the mail addressed to them, gauge with some exactitude the

various pressures. Facing them, we find an ever stronger executive power, employing thousands of advisers and bureaucrats, having little continuous contact with citizens and groups. James Burnham, in his recent *Congress and the American Tradition*, pointed out the danger of 'Caesarism' that such a gigantic executive branch implies, although in his hostility to it he failed to mention that events in other western democracies, not to speak of new nations and Communist regimes, point in this same direction.

While in this age of personal diplomacy the conservative forces in Congress may not be able to exert a strong pressure on US foreign policy, they are likely to do so indirectly, by making their weight generally felt, even if only in domestic matters. Unless the president and his advisers be carried away by the hybris which accompanies power, they will not antagonize these forces too much. President Kennedy would certainly prefer to remain in the White House after 1964 by a larger majority than the one which put him there.

Thomas Molnar

WALES—NEW SOUTH WALES, MAY 1961

T.H. Jones

Autumn was always cold, and so was spring,
In the country that I inhabit for ever
Despite this sun and despite whatever
Landfall luckily after my voyaging.
In that land it was always a hard faring
For men contracted to a brute endeavour
By their great taskmaster to what would never
Be more than a thin and bitter harvesting.

But here the sun is warm on belly and back
As I indulge in wine and memories
And hear above the long Pacific swell
Stern voices of my fathers saying I lack
Their faith, their courage, their black certainties,
And everything they knew of Heaven and Hell.

ERROL FLYNN AT SALAMAUA

Eric Feldt

IF A man makes about a million dollars a year, if his name is so well-known that anyone reading it in print (in which it appears frequently) can at once identify him, if his appearance is so familiar that when he steps into the street whether it is in Cuba or Calcutta he is recognized and a crowd gathers, then that man is famous, surely. Errol Flynn qualified easily. And he wrote a book.

He wrote of his boyhood and then of his life in New Guinea, where he went as an eighteen-year-old. He recounts various adventures until he is charged with murder at Salamaua in 1929. He had been about three days' march inland when he was attacked by natives. There was a shower of arrows, his personal servant was killed, he had an arrow through his own foot, he fired, killing one of the attackers, he followed his native carriers who had run away, he found another had been killed and, after a night of fear, made his way to the beach. Then he was charged with the murder of the native he had shot. The trial was dramatic, but he defended himself successfully against the prosecutor, Hawthorne, who was out to get him. An exciting and moving incident. And all lies.

How do I know? I was the District Officer at the time and place.

I remember Flynn arriving at Salamaua. He had come from Gizerum Plantation, where he had worked for Moneny and Reynolds, a matter which he does not mention in his book. Soon after his arrival, A.S.Cross, manager of Guinea Airways, told me while I was in Lae that he was looking for a man to manage their branch at Wau where his job would be mainly to receive and distribute the cargo flown in, and did I know anyone who could do it? I replied that there was a likely looking young man at Salamaua named Flynn, and soon afterwards Flynn was given the job and flown in to Wau. Flown in—he did not walk as he so graphically describes it in his book. He did not last long in the job and soon after it terminated, he left the District. If there had been a trial, I would have been the presiding magistrate. There was no trial. He did return to the District after 1932, when I had gone. There was no man named Hawthorne in the Administration at that time, though some of the names he uses are of actual persons.

There are other statements in the book which are obviously

untrue. His account of the village raided and wiped out by inland natives on New Ireland in 1927 is obviously false: the whole island was under complete control long before that date; New Ireland is long and narrow and no native is far from the sea and salt, which he gives as the reason for the raid. He finds Lutheran Missionaries in Aitape (they were all Catholic), he even places Finschhafen south of Salamaua.

It may be contended that the book is of value in revealing the character of the author. But what do you know of a man who is a congenital liar? Nothing that comes from his own mouth, as it cannot be trusted. Of course, the book is not all false and I believe some of his statements. I certainly believe that the kindly Mrs Giblin helped him and that Jack Ryan sent him money when he radioed for it when he was broke in Queensland. But this is from my own knowledge of them, not what I learn from the book. Even admissions apparently against his own interest are suspect. A man may admit a lesser offence to avoid being charged with a greater; for instance, a motorist may plead guilty to parking in the wrong place rather than be charged with driving under the influence, or a husband admit that he has been at the pub with the boys rather than that he has been with the girls.

Thus there is the admission that he stole diamonds from a woman in Sydney and then had them stolen from him in Hong Kong. Rumour at that time was that Flynn insured non-existent diamonds and then claimed for them. Insurance companies have long memories and in his later, prosperous days, Flynn may well have wanted to insure property, in which case he could not admit never having had the diamonds. Of course, this is rumour, and no one should believe that lying jade. But if the alternative is the word of Errol Flynn—? His claim that he tried to trace the woman and recompense her for the diamonds he stole does not square up with another of his actions at that time. When in Wau, on his second visit there, he had dental work done and, in the Flynn style, left without paying. When news of his fame and fortune in Hollywood reached Wau, the dentist sent him the account, saying that now he was prosperous, no doubt he would be glad to settle it. In return, the dentist got an autographed photograph.

Furthermore, admissions which would be against interest to an ordinary man were not necessarily so against Flynn. He was building himself up as the modern bold brave swashbuckler, amoral where women were concerned, generous when he had money but prepared to rob when he hadn't, a man who blazed

his way through the world with his wits and his strong right arm. He put it: 'I follow no leaders, no set of rules, and don't let anybody lay down the rules for me.'

But what does it all matter?

He was a famous man and many read what he writes. Being in no position to check up, they accept what he says. I even found myself reading his accounts of Hollywood and accepting them as information until I reminded myself that they probably weren't true, anyway. The favourable notices that the book received in the press, quoted on the dust cover, show that his story was largely accepted. It must have considerable influence, particularly on the uncritical young. They are apt to accept him as the brave bold individualist who faced up to life and lived it up. It would not occur to many to enquire what this brave bold hero did when war broke out, giving him a chance to show his real mettle. Gable and Stewart served with distinction but the swashbuckling Flynn stayed in Hollywood, making money, drinking and fornicating, an Australian in the United States, safe from conscription.

It remains to wonder how such a man could achieve fame. Give him his due, he succeeded in the highly competitive entertainment field. His public popularity as an actor must have been earned. No one is forced to see a picture if he doesn't want to. Then, having achieved stardom, advertising and the whole system of mass entertainment kept him making big money and his image before the people. Some of the romance of the characters he portrayed brushed off on to him, until people accepted this lying crook as a hero.

Eric Feldt

NEW LITERARY PERIODICALS

THE MELBOURNE CRITICAL REVIEW has now become a printed publication. It has hitherto been issued annually, but will be brought out more frequently if there is sufficient support for a periodical devoted wholly to literary criticism. It is edited by S. Goldberg, Department of English, Melbourne University, and costs 5s.

THE POETRY MAGAZINE has also made its debut as a printed bi-monthly magazine, replacing the previous organ of the Poetry Society. The first issue of the new series has poems by Judith Wright, Gwen Harwood, Clive Sansom and others, and a competition judged by A. D. Hope. The editorial address is Royal Exchange Box 20, Sydney, N.S.W., and the price per copy is 3s.

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JUDITH WRIGHT AND BAYLEBRIDGE

In regard to Charles Higham's critical article, Judith Wright has written to us as follows:

SIR—I scarcely ever bestir myself to correct a critic, but there are some errors and mis-statements in Mr Higham's article in your last issue which really must be contradicted. Unsupported statements and wild guesses too often pass into general currency in Australian criticism for me to let these pass, even though Mr Higham's article seems otherwise quite kindly meant.

Without going into minor mis-statements (it does not much matter, for instance, whether the so-called 'severities of life' at my school are or are not reflected in my verse'—though I can think of no possible example of this and Mr Higham gives none), I strenuously object to being called a passionate supporter of William Baylebridge, and I categorically deny that his work has had any influence on mine.

To begin with, I had scarcely heard of, had no interest in, and had certainly never read, any of Baylebridge's work at all, until I was commissioned in 1955 to prepare an anthology for Oxford University Press. Being a conscientious anthologist, I examined the work of many poets I had never been interested in, in the course of collecting the anthology, and among them was Baylebridge, whose quite enormous output dwarfs that of most other Australian poets, and whose claims for himself both as poet and thinker were large. To my mind, he fails on both counts, but I was interested in discovering just where and why his failure comes about. He was considered an important enough poet to be included in Inglis Moore's *Six Australian Poets*, one of the very few books of criticism of Australian poetry available; and accordingly, when I was asked at that time to give a lecture at Canberra University College, I chose Baylebridge as my subject. The lecture I gave, which was later printed in part only, in *Southerly*, was devoted to examining the claims Baylebridge made for himself, analysing the total argument embodied in his verse output, and stating that in my view the argument was unsatisfactory. In the introduction to *A Book of Australian Verse*, I again examined Baylebridge's claims for himself, and agreed that in his successful verse he merited a good deal of praise, but added that he is 'oddly out of place in the Australian climate of feeling', unlikely to have the influence he hoped for', 'not an attractive poetic personality', and in his less successful verse 'inflated and tortuous'. I cannot see that this constitutes passionate support. Since that time I have neither re-read nor reconsidered Baylebridge's poetry, which as far as I was concerned was a task a conscientious critic might have to perform but did not have to like.

In any case, since 1955, when I read and dismissed Baylebridge's poetry, in Mr Higham's own view I have written scarcely anything worth consideration. How, then, can I have been deeply influenced by his work?

May I gently direct Mr Higham's attention to one of the lines in John Thompson's 'Ars Critica', in the same issue of *Quadrant*, where Thompson raises the reviewer who 'says no more than what he really knows'?

To conclude—it is perfectly possible that my metres may be infelicitous, but Mr Higham has not proved it, since the lines which he uses as an example are misquoted to make it appear that they are metrically faulty.

I am sorry to have to correct Mr Higham; but I feel it is time Australian

writers started correcting slipshod statements of this kind, if only in the quarterly journals—where critics and reviewers are surely given enough time to check their assertions and quotations. Otherwise I thank Mr Higham for his article.

JUDITH WRIGHT

Charles Higham writes:

Miss Judith Wright says: 'I had scarcely heard of, had no interest in, and had certainly never read, any of Baylebridge's work at all, until I was commissioned in 1955 to prepare an anthology for Oxford University Press.' How then did she contrive to deliver a lecture on him at Canberra University College running to twenty pages of close typescript, on September 16, 1954? She adds: 'Being a conscientious anthologist, I examined the work of many poets I had never been interested in, in the course of collecting the anthology, and among them was Baylebridge. . . .' Are we to assume then that if she is correct in saying she edited the anthology *after* the lecture concerned, she had at the time she gave the lecture no interest in her subject? One assumes she has got her dates mixed, but there follows a statement inexplicable on any ground. She says: 'among them was Baylebridge . . . whose claims for himself both as poet and thinker were large. To my mind, he fails on both counts. . . .' This statement is completely at odds with the last paragraph of her reprinted lecture (issued by Canberra University College) in which she says of him as a poet: '(He) deserves not merely our admiration and our sympathy, but some small measure of our affection.' Elsewhere in the lecture, she seems to me to indicate just that degree of passionate support I have referred to. She even goes so far as to refer to individual lines as: 'unsurpassed in our literature'. And again: 'Baylebridge is an alarmingly neglected poet . . . Baylebridge's thought is a system . . . much more original than his critics have given him credit for. . . . He is a cliff worth climbing.' And again, his sonnets: 'have the true Shakespearian movement'. 'Rich in splendid phrase', she says of this verse. 'We have few men of that calibre', she says of its author. I ask the student to read her lecture and to see whether in fact—for all her reservations—Miss Wright is not earnestly, even passionately, making a case for Baylebridge. And then I ask him to re-read her current statement that he failed both as poet and thinker, and make what sense of it he will. Can we credit her words when she says that reading Baylebridge's works: 'was a task a conscientious critic might have to perform but did not have to like' when she said, ending her lecture: 'He deserves not only our admiration and our sympathy, but some small measure of our affection'? Which attitude is false, and which is true?

CHARLES HIGHAM

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AUSTRALIAN WRITERS AND THEIR WORK
GEOFFREY DUTTON:
Patrick White

JOHN HETHERINGTON:
Norman Lindsay
Lansdowne Press. Melbourne. 8s. 6d. each

One problem which continues to face the student of Australian literature is the paucity of our criticism. If he goes to the critics, he will find some scholarly and descriptive books, some useful background material, but almost nothing which attempts critical examination and evaluation of our literature. What can he find that is seriously concerned with critical standards? There are some scattered articles of value, but what is there of book length to put beside Buckley's *Essays in Poetry* and Phillips' *The Australian Tradition*? It is this absence of a body of substantial criticism that encourages the two kinds of depressing reaction to Australian novels and collections of verse: in some circles they are received with indiscriminate overpraise, in others with sour, carping denigration.

In bemoaning this state of affairs, one is not asking for the establishment of a Great Tradition or a rigorously exclusive canon of established classics, but merely hoping for a climate where responsible discussion of our literature is possible; where the criteria of one reviewer are at least relevant to his fellows; where critical attitudes cannot be written off as manifestations of gang warfare, nor as evidence of one's home-town prejudices.

At least in the quarterlies, there are clear signs that the situation has been improving over the last decade. For this we should be decently grateful, and we should welcome any new publications which extend the field of literary criticism. In particular it is pleasing to see the beginning of a series like the Lansdowne Press' forty-page booklets on *Australian Writers and Their Work*.

To judge from the first two volumes, these studies will be comparable in size and conception to those in the British Council's valuable series, *Writers and Their Work*. Both series must provide introductory material for the intelligent 'common reader' who is unfamiliar with the work under discussion. Most of the volumes in the British Council series successfully combine such material with a certain amount of serious critical enquiry; and this is what we should expect of *Australian Writers and Their Work*.

The first two of the series, John Hetherington's *Norman Lindsay* and Geoffrey Dutton's *Patrick White*, are vastly different in quality. Hetherington, faced with Lindsay's snook-cocking novels, can do little to account for the remarkable pervasiveness and duration of Lindsay's influence. We are offered enthusiastic potted summaries of novel after novel, occasional generalizations about the author's 'message' or 'purpose', and virtually no discrimination at all. The nearest thing to judgment offered is in such nervous stabs as: 'A *Curate in Bohemia* is not, as a novel, in the class of *Saturdee*, *Redheap*, or *Miracles by Arrangement*, but it cannot be dismissed as a mere fragment of entertaining trivia. Much of its action is trivial to be sure, but the whole novel is an effective period piece, and its value as such is not likely to diminish with time; its value might even tend to grow.'

If Dutton were as superficial as Hetherington, we could confidently write the series off altogether (what possible audience benefits from *that* sort of introduction?). But Dutton's study of White is at least serious and enquiring. He sets out to evaluate White's five novels, traces an imaginative development through them, and

at his best is concise and perceptive. If he oversimplifies some critical concepts (that of 'style' for instance), he also puts his finger on key critical issues. He observes of Laura's rôle in *Voss*: 'One can see what White is up to, after a fashion, but the very feeling that he is "up to" something is distressing', without losing sight of the book's considerable achievement. And he is lucid and well-balanced about *The Tree of Man*.

Yet in the last resort Dutton's study seems cluttered and uneven. Partly this is due to the fact that he, also, feels obliged to summarize plots—a procedure which merely distracts attention from the serious questions he asks. Further, he overestimates the hostility of Australian critics to White (in fact, after some jackalish reviews, the critics have generally been enthusiastic) and seems determined to prove White's stature by a process of random name-dropping; Shakespeare, Emily Brontë, Melville, Joyce, Lawrence, Faulkner and that gaudiest of current literary fashions, Lawrence Durrell, are among the comparisons invoked. If a couple of analogies were really investigated, valuable points might emerge, but as it stands the procedure looks over-assertive, too much like a defence mechanism. In fact, it partly defeats Dutton's purpose by playing into the hands of White's uncritical detractors. After all, White is important enough not to need partisans.

Chris Wallace-Crabbe

W. H. G. EDDY:
Orr
Jacaranda Press. Brisbane. 59s. 6d.

This book is not merely another summary of S.S.Orr's case against the University and Supreme Court of Tasmania. According to the author that would not require a book of this length (750 pages): for him 'There is no problem in establishing Orr's innocence; that quickly becomes clear once we squarely confront the issues.' His main theme is quite a different one and raises questions of quite a different order. He sets out to explain how a small group of ruthless men framed an innocent man, and to show in detail how they did it largely by using techniques perfected in Communist countries in the course of purges and staged trials. He implies that one's understanding of what happened in Hobart would be helped by a study of what has happened in Budapest, Warsaw or Moscow. Orr's enemies 'knew the requirements of tyranny with extraordinary intimacy'. (One of them was engaged in writing a book about it.) They knew how systematically to isolate the victim, to destroy the will to truth in the community, to exploit fear and hope, to confuse issues, to defame, misrepresent, and intimidate. Eddy, in other words, goes far beyond the guilt-or-innocence questions and tries to establish that something new and evil has been introduced into Australian life in the course of the Orr case. Unless one naïvely assumes that this kind of thing just could not happen in Australia (and quite apart from the fact that a number of prominent churchmen and academics are impressed by Eddy's case) it is a theory that should be examined.

One of the great successes of Orr's enemies, on the Eddy view, was to get a girl to 'confess' she had intercourse with Orr when in fact she had not; to persuade a girl who on Tuesday, February 21, 1956, could write: 'I wish to declare that during the investigation into the truth of the slanderous statements made about Professor Orr and myself I have been able to defend neither myself nor him . . .' to confess a few days later that the 'slanderous statements' were true. ('In the manipulation of minds that was frightening efficiency.') Chapter 8: 'How the Kemp Charges were Procured', is a crucial one for Eddy's thesis, and in a short review one may reasonably concentrate on this chapter to see how it is estab-

lished. (It is crucial in another sense. It reads like a sort of Open Letter to Miss Suzanne Kemp urging her to withdraw her 'confession' and thereby completely destroy the case against Orr.)

In broad outline the argument is this: she was at the time more or less unbalanced—or at least passing through a disturbed psychological phase. 'I have a duty,' says Eddy, 'to state that I have seen a sworn statement of the doctor concerned.' She mentioned her 'troubles' to Orr whom she admired as a philosopher and fighter for academic rights, and Orr urged her to see a psychiatrist. She was hurt by this 'rebuff', hurt again when he displayed little interest in her 'heroic gesture' of writing the letter of February 21, and deeply hurt when a 'special operator' working for Orr's enemies maliciously induced her to believe Orr had betrayed her confidence by telling other people about her 'troubles'. Disillusioned and urged on by the 'special operator' she finally told her father about an 'affair' with Orr. He then drove with the 'special operator' to Orr's house, charged him with seducing his daughter, and assaulted him. Kemp was now in danger of being sued by Orr for assault and defamation. But it so happened that Orr's enemies in the University now needed a sex charge against him, because the other cooked-up charges might not be enough to justify dismissing him and Orr already had filed writs against four academics for defamation. If Kemp could lay a sex charge Orr would be summarily dismissed and be in no position to sue anyone, except perhaps the University which would then hit him with all the slanders his enemies had collected or invented. With luck the whole thing would be hushed up. Miss Kemp was only nineteen, she did what she thought best, and to protect her father, publicly 'confessed'.

However I must say that I find Eddy's exposition not only unconvincing in its general approach, assuming a conspiracy on the thinnest of evidence and from then on twisting everything to fit his theory, but sometimes absurd in detail. To take three examples, he says that when Miss Kemp came to Orr's house to tell him about her letter of February 21, Orr 'was inclined to be impatient because he was interested in a radio play which was about to begin. He turned it down and only half listened' as Miss Kemp explained to his wife. In other words although Orr was convinced there was a plot to destroy him, and already had filed writs against four of his defamers, and was desperately collecting material for his case, he only impatiently half listened to a girl who had come to give the strongest possible evidence against the most serious of all the 'slanderous statements' made against him—because he wanted to listen to a radio play. If Eddy can believe this, what will he not believe? On the other hand he needs this to give some sort of plausibility to his theory or conjecture that Miss Kemp was sufficiently upset by Orr's indifference to begin to be in the frame of mind where she would be willing to tell the most outrageous lies about him.

Again, at the University enquiry she stated that at first she opposed her father's proposal to tell the Vice-Chancellor of her confession: 'but afterwards I agreed to everything as the best line of action'. To Eddy this is an 'almost incredible admission that she became a mere tool of the conspirators, willing apparently to do or say *anything*'. Incredible is indeed the word.

Or again when she said in Court that at the University enquiry 'I volunteered all the information they had previously', Eddy considers this 'another staggering revelation' which could only mean simple acquiescence or collusion. Could it not also mean simple confirmation?

One cannot of course ask too much.

Anyone setting out to expose a conspiracy has to speculate to some extent and cannot document every step. Further, conspiracies do happen, and whenever one is exposed there will always be someone ready to advance less dramatic, more 'reasonable'—though quite false—explanations of the facts. But one can at least expect that an exposure not be based on the sort of mysterious insight instanced above and that it be in principle possible to disprove it. In Eddy's case it is, in effect, unfalsifiable. Whatever happens is in his mind a confirmation. If for the sake of argument, Orr were suddenly to announce tomorrow that he had been lying throughout, his Eddy-ite supporters would say: 'Poor Orr, they've made him crack up. He's no longer responsible for what he says.' It is difficult to argue against positions of this kind.

It is agreed that the University at the time was a faction-ridden and embittered place. It is also agreed that some men were for improper political reasons anxious to get rid of Orr (while others honestly believed he was unfit to be a professor). It is also agreed that Council handled the case very badly, that natural justice was not done, and that Council deserved censure on a variety of important points. It is because of one's awareness of all this that one is prepared to examine Eddy's hypothesis. But he does not advance the sort of evidence that would justify going beyond this to the belief in a systematic totalitarian-type conspiracy.

What difference then will this book make to the Orr case? The Eddy type of hypothesis—never till now fully expounded and remaining only a suspicion—has strengthened the hands of those who initiated the (successful) boycott of the Philosophy Chair and the (unsuccessful) boycott of the University as a whole. When this book is read and the hypothesis seen as unsupportable, then we are left with our 'assessment of the probabilities' (to quote the best brief statement of the pro-Orr position, the Report of the Federal Council Committee)—probabilities which, in my opinion at least, are enough to justify continuing the enquiries into the case but not enough to justify continuing the boycotts.

Peter Coleman

ROBIN BOYD:
The Australian Ugliness
Cheshire. Melbourne. 35s. 0d.

Since this book came out the tumult and the shouting have died, but it has been much more than a nine days' wonder. Its width of evidence and penetration are undeniable. Yet I believe that in its present form it will gain a place, not as the considered testament of a crusader, but as a book of reference, rich in curious detail; or (more importantly at this stage in our history) as a book into which one dips occasionally, reading one chapter at a time, as a stimulus and measuring-stick. It can re-emphasize the aridities which even the most indignant sometimes take for granted; and in these years of fantastic proliferation, perpendicular and horizontal in our cities and suburbia, it can spur one to try and assess the progress of planning, its quality, the rates of our movement towards or away from perpetrating ugliness.

Mr Boyd scans the history of inhabited Australia with the eye of an erudite eagle. Tracing the complex but not difficult birth of the great ugliness, he examines its genes and multiplications from Melbourne, 'the Featurist Capital', outwards. He finds that Anglophilia is significant, but more so nowadays its opposite, Austerica: 'not a place but a way of life, found in any country where an austerity version of the American dream overtakes the indigenous culture'. But as the name suggests, Austerica is also hysterical, and it flourishes best in Australia. Which is

the more reason for lamming into us. Behind Anglophilia and Austerica lie other compulsions like the cult of pioneering (even now) and taming the environment, including trees. . . . And there is much more. Dictum, definition and thesis tumble pellmell from the pages. The book is a mosaic of detail, almost overpowering in its cumulative effect.

While many of the pioneers' descendants have dwindled to anonyms, contributing consciously or not to the Australian ugliness, the Boyds have retained an explorative energy in various fields, Robin Boyd as much as any. His book is the product of a mind which, unlike most professional men's minds, can escape the pull of its professional training and go into orbit seeking explanations in other realms, such as sociology, psychology and history. Yet it is the fecundity (and impatience?) of this mind which in the outcome makes the work in its present form something to be consulted for reference or periodic stimulus rather than read as a unity. Reviewers have heaped praise on it, but I venture to suggest that this is more because of its motivation and abundance of vivid and provocative material than because of its virtue as an exposition of a point of view in final shape. In the daily letter-columns some affronted readers have attacked the book on the ground that there *are* attractive spots in inhabited Australia. They have missed the point, but this may be because of the way in which the material is presented.

The book gives the impression of having originated as a number of isolated articles or lectures, with recapitulations to jog the memory; and that, though arranged in logical sequence, they have not been pulled together for consistent as opposed to sporadic reading. There is a curious aura of non-integration. Moreover, there seem (I say 'seem' because it is hard, significantly, to pin them down) to be contradictions, as among the numerous examples of Featurism. When the book came out, this word, coined by Mr Boyd, had a great vogue. From random inquiry, one suspects that many who read the first edition remember only this word and a few of Mr Boyd's examples. They apply it lavishly, always pejoratively and not always accurately. If so, it is fair at least partly to blame the book. If it were tighter it would be clearer and therefore more imperative. To make it so would involve a lot of re-setting so it is not surprising that in its third edition (at time of writing) it remains unedited.

Another less technical criticism is that politics, economics and human nature make Boyd's vision of the non-Featurist society a pipedream. This may be so, but such books need to be written. It is right to campaign for an ideal, particularly in Australia. Because of our notorious dislike—or fear—of criticism, it is the more important that authoritative books analysing the Australian scene should not pull their punches. In print and speech we earbash enough about our virtues—how we can improvise, the life-saver physique, sporting prowess, acceptance of a man for what he is, not who; and so on. We still rest largely on laurels made of stringybark and greenhide. It's good medicine to hear more about what we lack—such as sensitivity to ugliness. Faults like this are often glossed over or excused with the phrase 'we're a young nation'. If this is true—and I consider it far too kind a diagnosis—the fact remains that we have to grow up. Boyd is one of the people who can help us do so. But he could help more by cleaning up the book.

This criticism must be seen in proportion to a bracing achievement; so must the fact that Boyd's bomb will probably make little change in the townscape.

Mungo MacCallum

A. G. AUSTIN:
Education in Australia
Pitman. Melbourne. 32s. 6d.

Professor Leicester Webb, speaking at the Fink Education Seminar in Melbourne two years ago, claimed that, as a result of the relatively larger increase of Catholics in the population of Australia, the Protestant stereotype of a Roman Catholic Church 'essentially undemocratic and avid for political power' had made an 'unwelcome appearance'. A.G.Austin, in the book under review, emphasizes the role this stereotype has played in determining trends in educational legislation in this country. He presents the image of a Church powerful and tyrannical, censorious, anti-social, and even seditious—a Church that was therefore rightly to be prevented by the 'secular Acts . . . from continuing its assault upon the liberal secular State with the aid of the State's own resources'.

The picture is a disturbing one and, as Austin shows, carried considerable propaganda value, even though it was probably less than he claims and, as he agrees, restricted only to 'the closing stages' of the education debate.

The attempt to sustain the thesis, however, and perhaps to make more of it than should be made has led the author into a number of distortions. In assigning too much importance, for example, to the *Syllabus of Errors* (1864) in the determination of the bishops' policy in Australia, he has fallen into the fallacy of false cause. A perceptible stiffening in the attitude of the bishops is to be observed over the eighteen-sixties and 'seventies but it was not due primarily to the *Syllabus*. The changed attitude (at least in its explicit form) may have been '*post hoc*', but it was certainly not so completely '*propter hoc*'. McHale of Tuam and the decisions of the bishops of Ireland in the 'fifties exerted much more influence on the Australian hierarchy than Pius IX and the *Syllabus*.

A further instance is the statement that in Parkes's Public Instruction Act of 1880 the religious instruction provisions of 1866 were retained 'unaltered'. This makes a point, but it is quite misleading unless certain distinctions are made. Similarly, to describe the dilemma in which the New South Wales bishops found themselves in the decade before 1879—when Polding was in his dotage, Vaughan (for the first half of the decade at any rate) not even yet in the colony, and each of the three rugged Irish suffragans going his own individualist way—as a 'complicated tactical move' is to carry the image a little too far. To confront such a move the author has to provide a much bigger, nobler Parkes than history will allow. Parkes's magnificent picture of himself as the doughty opponent of the 'audacious prelate', the defender of 'the liberty of the subject' and the champion of a 'free national spirit' was taken with a grain of salt even in his own time. Later research has made it necessary to step up the dose to two grains.

These and other minor distortions, however, do not seriously detract from the value of Austin's work. The image itself is a distortion and the author is right in emphasizing it. (This, I should say, is the most original aspect of his work.) But he is wrong as an historian and an accomplished lecturer in this field in not separating for his reader the image from the reality. Likewise does he default in not adopting a more critical attitude to the sillier pretensions of the nineteenth-century liberalism, especially since these pretensions have been so adequately exposed in recent years. The book will undoubtedly be used as a text book. One might therefore have expected a more critical approach, especially in view of the fact that it will be used mainly by graduate students.

The book cannot, except in the

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limited sense indicated above, be called an original work; nor is it intended to be. By working through the source material brought to light by recent scholars in this field (Clark, Cable, Gregory and others mentioned in the preface) the author attempts to do for state education what they have done for non-state education. And he does this with competence and verve. When, for example, the climax of the book is reached at the end of the penultimate chapter, he proclaims with a merited sense of achievement: 'The State had triumphed.' But how Pyrrhic that victory was can be inferred from the chapter that follows.

The title, *Australian Education*, is misleading because, as the author admits in his preface, it is 'not a history of Australian education'. It makes little or no reference to private schools or to secondary or tertiary education. Neither does it refer to schooling as such except indirectly. It is mainly concerned with the control of education and the political issues related thereto. Within these limits, however, it is a most readable book, comprehensive yet not too long, extremely well written in a style that is clear, forceful, and in parts elegant—best where the author is calling on material from his own original research (on Rusden), shakiest where he is reprocessing the work of others.

But the image of the Catholic Church presented in this book is foreign, as can be seen in the references—to Lord John Russell, to Gladstone, and to Baron von Stockmar, etc.—from which it is built up. (A sufficient number of references could have been found in Australia but, as the author probably judged, these could not be taken with any seriousness.) The image is also inaccurate and overdrawn: whereas it may have applied with some force to New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia, it applied with far less force in the other colonies, where the Anglicans held out longer in their support of the denominational schools. Moreover it ill fitted the remnant (as low as ten per cent of the population in South Australia) of poorly housed, socially inferior Irish immigrants who made up the Catholic Church in Australia at the time. Nevertheless where it did apply it was effectively exploited by the secularists.

In bringing this out Austin does a distinct service: first to Protestants, by showing them what it was that stampeded them in the end, thus causing them to forego what meagre form of religious instruction they still had left: secondly to Catholics, who are prone to be very much preoccupied with themselves and their own grievances, by showing them how others see them. What they see will be unflattering, even distasteful; but it should also be very salutary.

Brother Ronald Fogarty

TSUJI MASANOBU:
Singapore: The Japanese Version
Ure Smith. Sydney. 35s. 0d.

This book is a valuable translation of Colonel Tsuji's account of the Malayan campaign, originally written in 1951. The author, who was Chief of Planning and Operations under General Yamashita, Japanese army commander on the Malayan front, states that he wished to reply to the account given in Churchill's memoirs and so wrote a review of the campaign from the Japanese standpoint. The English version covers the campaign from its preparation, through the invasion of the north Malayan coastline, to the major battles in the peninsula and down to the eventual capture of Singapore. The story is clearly expounded and moves at a steady pace. It is intensely interesting even when it provokes intense disagreement.

Although in its main outlines the story is familiar, Colonel Tsuji is able to throw special light on many

problems from his own knowledge and experience. He writes with authority on the morale of the Japanese forces and the means taken to maintain it; of the doubts and fears and disagreements of the commanders in the field; and of those victories which came to them as surprises. Part One in particular contains much unfamiliar information about Japanese preparations. Tsuji was posted to Formosa at the end of 1940 to join a small unit collecting advance information about jungle warfare. In September 1941 he went to his staff appointment in Indo-China. Of this period, he writes: 'I state beyond doubt and without fear of contradiction that not until September 1941 did we begin active preparations for military operations to the south' (p. 24) and blames Tokyo for its indecisiveness in continuing negotiations with the United States, while preparing its armies for a southward advance.

The book also contains Colonel Tsuji's reflections on Japan's successes and his formula for Japan's future. The following passage expresses much of the underlying theme:—'It is not boasting to say that the conduct of the plan of operations in Malaya was excellent, but the success of the campaign was not due merely to the plan of operations, it was mainly attributable to the front-line soldiers, who were on fire with the high ideal of the emancipation of Asia, and displayed a fighting spirit which aroused the admiration of Mr Churchill. Everyone must acknowledge that throughout the whole campaign our soldiers without exception fought splendidly under the orders of the young officers who led them into battle. . . . The young people of today must, for the sake of the nation, develop the same spirit of altruism, self-sacrifice and purity of motive that actuated the youth of Japan on the battlefields of Malaya.' (pp. 175-6)

Tsuji frankly warns us in his preface that he has been criticized in Japan for 'inciting jingoist thoughts'. And some readers will be inclined to side with his Japanese critics and ask how far his ideas would be typical of Japanese today. This is one failing of the book: it does not tell us enough about Colonel Tsuji and his colourful career before and after the war. There are odd references which only whet our appetite for more: 'When the war ended, Colonel Tsuji was ordered by the Japanese High Command to disappear and preserve himself for the reconstruction of Japan. In disguise he spent some years wandering through Siam, Indo-China and China before returning to Japan.' (p. 264, footnote) We could have been told that, to avoid being detained by the British army as a war criminal, Tsuji disguised himself as a Buddhist monk and stayed on in South-east Asia, mainly in Indo-China; that he returned to Japan in 1949 after the war crimes trials had ended and has since written a number of books about his experiences; and that he has been a member of the House of Representatives since 1952 and a supporter of the conservative parties with an inclination towards certain right-wing associations. With some information of this kind, the reader would have been able to set the views which Colonel Tsuji sincerely and frankly expresses in proper perspective.

The book, which is of peculiar interest to an Australian audience, is also addressed to the world-wide audience that was affected by the Pacific war.

The Sydney publisher is to be commended on his enterprise.

Ian Nish

QUADRANT is published at 2 Albert Street, Sydney, by H.R.Krygier on behalf of the Australian Association for Cultural Freedom. Statements made editorially or by contributors are not to be attributed to the Association.